

---

# **The Dynamics of Issue Attention**

## **On Political Parties' Salience Strategies in European Multi-Party Systems**

---

Dissertation

zur Erlangung des akademischen Grades

**doctor of Philosophy  
(Ph.D)**

eingereicht an  
der Kultur-, Sozial- und Bildungswissenschaftlichen Fakultät  
der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

von  
Sjoerd van Heck

Präsidentin der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin  
*Prof. Dr.-Ing. Dr. Sabine Kunst*

Dekanin der Kultur-, Sozial- und Bildungswissenschaftlichen Fakultät  
*Prof. Dr. Julia von Blumenthal*

Gutachter:

1. Prof. Dr. Bernhard Weißels
2. Prof. Dr. Ellen M. Immergut
3. Prof. Lawrence Ezrow, PhD

Tag der mündlichen Prüfung: 05.09.2016

# **The Dynamics of Issue Attention**

## **On Political Parties' Salience Strategies in European Multi-Party Systems**

Sjoerd van Heck

*A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.*

*The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences,  
Humboldt University of Berlin.*

### **Thesis Committee**

Prof. Dr. Bernhard Weßels (*Supervisor*)

Prof. Dr. Ellen M. Immergut (*2<sup>nd</sup> Supervisor*)

Prof. Lawrence Ezrow, PhD (*External Supervisor*)

Date of the thesis defense: 05.09.2016

## Summary

This dissertation contributes to the literature by providing an answer to the following research question:

*To what extent do external party system pressures and internal party organizational structures impact parties' issue attention strategies in western European multi-party systems?*

Issue attention strategies are conceptualized as parties' selective emphasis of policy issues. Party system pressures are conceptualized in two ways: (1) parties' strategic position within the party system as being a mainstream government, mainstream opposition or challenger party, and (2) the degree of electoral support for 'issue entrepreneurs'. Internal party organizational structures refer to the extent to which organizational structures within parties favour the party leadership, or rather the activist base.

The core of this dissertation consists of three empirical chapters. The first empirical chapter analyses 'party interaction' in issue competition. It shows that parties are, generally speaking, responsive to the agendas of their competitors. Changes in the systemic salience of issue domains, that is the extent to which other parties emphasize groups of issues, significantly impact individual parties' issue attention. However, not all parties are equally responsive. Experience in government coalitions should make mainstream parties more 'sensitive' towards their competitive environment whereas challenger parties, on the other hand, push forward their own agendas and ignore shifts in the systemic salience of issue domains. Furthermore, party leaders perceive the need for their party to respond to competitors and 'ride the wave' of the party system agenda more strongly than do party activists. Activists are mainly driven by policy-seeking motivations and would like to see the party maintain its focus on its traditional policy agenda. The chapter employs regression techniques which indicate tentative support for these theoretical expectations. The results also suggest differences in issue responsiveness to competitors when comparing the economic and the cultural issue domain.

The second empirical chapter deals with the scope of parties' issue agendas. Why do political parties in some election campaigns offer a broad and encompassing policy agenda to voters, whereas at other times they confine their policy appeals and pursue a narrow agenda focusing on a few issues only? By addressing this question, the chapter aims to advance our understanding of the politics of 'issue attention diversity'. The argument is that challenger parties, losers in the current system, seek to change the political status quo by focusing on a few issues only, hence presenting a confined agenda. Mainstream parties have an incentive to reinforce existing patterns of competition and thus distribute their attention across a wide range of issues. Moreover, mainstream parties change the scope of their agenda when they are confronted with electoral losses or when they are excluded from office. The extent to which parties respond to these external stimuli, however, depends on intra-party politics. Party leaders seek to satisfy vote- and office-seeking motivations and 'appeal broadly', whereas activists want the party to 'speak to the base' and narrow down its issue appeals. These theoretical expectations are empirically tested.

The third empirical chapter deals with innovations in political issue-markets. It examines how parties respond to the pressure to address new issues, induced by the electoral success of issue entrepreneurs. When do parties engage in political competition on issue dimensions promoted by these issue entrepreneurs, and when do they dismiss their appeals? This chapter seeks to contribute to our understanding of the dynamics of the issue space in European democracies by examining the impact of electoral support for green, far right and Eurosceptic parties on the issue agendas of other parties. The empirical analyses highlight two things. First, in addition to green and far right support, Eurosceptic party success also provokes other parties to adjust their issue salience strategies. Specifically, parties adapt to the Eurosceptic challenger by addressing European integration issues more strongly. Second, this effect is conditional and depends on the salience the challengers themselves attach to the issue. If Eurosceptic parties regard European integration issues as particularly important, other parties adapt and shift salience to this issue dimension. For green and far right parties, who uniformly regard 'their' issues as highly important, such a conditional effect is absent.

## Zusammenfassung

Diese Dissertation trägt zur Forschungsliteratur bei, in dem sie eine Antwort auf folgende Forschungsfrage liefert:

*Inwiefern beeinflussen der externe Druck durch Parteiensystem und die interne, organisationale Parteistruktur die thematischen Berücksichtigungsstrategien in westlichen, Europäischen Mehrparteiensystemen?*

Thematische Berücksichtigungsstrategien werden konzeptualisiert als parteiliche, selektive Hervorhebung von policy issues. Der externe Druck durch das Parteiensystem wird auf zwei Arten konzipiert: (1) die strategische Position einer Partei innerhalb eines Parteiensystems als etablierte Regierungspartei, etablierte Opposition, oder herausfordernde Partei, und (2) dem Grade der elektoralen Unterstützung für 'Themen-Entrepreneure'. Die innerparteiliche, organisationale Struktur bezieht sich darauf, inwiefern die Struktur innerhalb der Partei die Parteiführung oder eher die aktivistische Parteibasis begünstigt.

Der Kern dieser Dissertation besteht aus drei empirischen Kapiteln. Das erste empirische Kapitel analysiert die 'Parteieninteraktion' im thematischen Wettbewerb. Es zeigt, dass Parteien, allgemein betrachtet, empfänglich für die Agenda ihrer Mitbewerber sind. Änderungen in der system-internen Salienz von Themenbereichen, sprich, dem Grade zu dem andere Parteien einzelne Themengruppen betonen, beeinflusst signifikant die parteiliche Aufmerksamkeit gegenüber einem Thema. Allerdings sind nicht alle Parteien in gleichem Maße empfänglich. Erfahrung in Koalitionen sollte etablierte Regierungsparteien empfänglicher für Signale der wettbewerblichen Umgebung machen, wohingegen herausfordernde Parteien ihre eigene Agenda antreiben und Veränderungen in der system-internen Salienz von Themenbereichen ignorieren. Weiterhin nehmen die Parteiführungen eine größere Notwendigkeit wahr, auf Konkurrenten zu reagieren und auf der Welle der Themen des Parteiensystems mitzuschwimmen. Aktivisten sind stattdessen eher von 'policy-seeking'-Motivationen angetrieben und bevorzugen eher, dass die Partei thematisch einen traditionellen Fokus beibehält. Das Kapitel gebraucht dabei Regressionstechniken, welche vorläufige Unterstützung liefern für diese theoretischen Erwartungen. Die Resultate legen dabei ebenfalls Unterschiede der thematischen Empfänglichkeit gegenüber Konkurrenten nahe, wenn verschiedene Bereiche, etwa der kulturelle oder wirtschaftliche, betrachtet werden.

Das zweite empirische Kapitel behandelt die Reichweite von parteilichen Themenkatalogen. Warum bieten politische Parteien den Wählern in einigen Wahlen eine breite und umfassende Agenda, wohingegen sie sich in anderen Zeiten in ihrem Anspruch beschränken und eine enge politische Agenda verfolgen, in dem sie lediglich einige wenige Themen fokussieren? Durch das behandeln dieser Frage versucht das Kapitel unser Verständnis von 'issue attention diversity' zu erweitern. Das Argument ist dabei, dass herausfordernde Parteien, Verlierer im aktuellen System, den Status quo zu ändern suchen, indem sie sich auf wenige Themen fokussieren und dadurch eine begrenzte Agenda präsentieren. Etablierte Parteien hingegen haben einen Anreiz, bestehende Muster des Wettbewerbs zu untermauern und verteilen somit ihre Aufmerksamkeit auf eine Vielzahl von Themen. Weiterhin ändern etablierte Parteien die Reichweite ihrer Agenda, wenn sie mit elektoralen Verlusten konfrontiert, oder von Regierungen ausgeschlossen sind. Der Umfang zu welchem Parteien auf diese externen Stimuli reagieren hängt dabei jedoch von innerparteilicher Politik ab. Parteiführungen versuchen, sowohl stimmen- als auch ämterbezogene Motivationen zu befriedigen, als auch breitgefächert anzusprechen, wohingegen Aktivisten wollen, dass zur Parteibasis gesprochen wird und der thematische Anspruch beschränkt wird. Diese empirischen Erwartungen werden empirisch untersucht.

Der dritte empirische Teil behandelt Innovationen auf dem Markt der politischen Themen. Er untersucht, wie Parteien auf den Druck reagieren, neue Themen anzusprechen, veranlasst durch den Wahlerfolg von sogenannten 'Themen-Entrepreneuren'. Wann engagieren sich Parteien in einem Wettbewerb hinsichtlich von solchen Entrepreneurien induzierten Themen und wann weisen sie diesen Anreiz ab? Das Kapitel sucht dabei zum Verständnis von Dynamiken des 'thematischen Raumes' Europäischer Demokratien beizutragen, indem der Einfluss von Wählerunterstützung für grüne, rechtsaußen- und euroskeptische Parteien auf thematische Agenden untersucht wird. Die empirische Analyse hebt dabei zwei Sachen hervor. Zum einen, neben Unterstützung für grüne und rechtsaußen Parteien, provoziert auch der Erfolg von euroskeptischen Parteien andere Parteien dazu, ihre thematischen Berücksichtigungsstrategien anzupassen. Im Besonderen passen Parteien sich der europaskeptischen Partei an, indem sie Themen der Europäischen Integration stärken adressieren. Zum anderen ist dieser Effekt konditional und hängt von der Salienz ab, die die herausfordernde Partei dem Thema zumisst. Wenn europaskeptische Parteien die Europäische Integration als besonders wichtig ansehen, passen sich andere Parteien an und verlagern Aufmerksamkeit in diesen Themenbereich. Hinsichtlich grüner und rechtsaußen-Parteien, die jeweils durchweg 'ihre' Themen als sehr wichtig betrachten, bleibt dieser konditionale Effekt aus.

*Voor Laurens,,,*

# Acknowledgements

*I owe a debt of gratitude to a great number of people. Without their support I could not have finished this project. First, I want to thank my supervisor Bernhard Weßels. Bernhard supported me with me practical advice, he read the rough and drafty versions of the chapters that I gave to him and provided me with useful comments and feedback. More importantly, though, he gave me confidence in times of doubt. I am thankful that he arranged for me a position at the WZB, which provided me with the time and the resources I needed to finish this project. I also want to thank Ellen Immergut. From the moment I arrived in Berlin, Ellen made me feel welcome at BGSS and the HU. She gave me the opportunity to teach one of her introductory courses and arranged for me to go to Duke University as a visiting student. My work also greatly benefited from participating in Ellen's Comparative Politics colloquium. I thank Lawrence Ezrow for joining my committee and for providing me with feedback.*

*Over the course of this project I have benefited greatly from the constructive criticism, helpful suggestions, feedback and comments from several people. I thank Christoffer Green-Pedersen, Daniel Bischof, Gijs Schumacher, Zachary Greene, Herbert Kitschelt, Jelle Koedam, Tarik Abou-Chadi, Nicolas Merz, Matthias Orlowski, Onawa Promise Lacewell, Saara Inkinen, all my colleagues at the research unit 'Democracy and Democratization' at the WZB and all my fellow graduate students at BGSS and Duke.*

*I want to thank the WZB Berlin Social Science Center and the Berlin Graduate School of Social Sciences for financial aid. I thank the BGSS team, especially Martin Nagelschmidt, Thomas Wosnitza and Jana Rieckman, for their support.*

*I am grateful for having met so many great people while I was carrying out this project over the last four years, and for all the new friends that I have made. I thank Thomas, Lisa, Robin, Ilyas, Rob, Josephine, Raphaela, Imke, and many others; above all for not all the time asking me how my dissertation was coming along – it helped me to keep my sanity.*

*I thank my parents and my brothers Wouter and Joost for always supporting me. I also thank all my friends back in the Netherlands. I am grateful that I can count Maarten, Robin and Laurens among them. I remember having a Skype conversation with Laurens at a time when I had great doubts. I admitted to him that the thought of abandoning the project and doing something else had crossed my mind. He replied by saying, bluntly, that quitting simply was not an option. I dedicate this work to him, in loving memory.*

Berlin, July 2016

---

## Contents

---

<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>Contents</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>List of Figures</b>	<b>viii</b>
<b>List of Tables</b>	<b>ix</b>
<b>1 Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 The Puzzle . . . . .	2
1.2 The Research Question . . . . .	4
1.3 The Argument . . . . .	5
1.4 Dissertation Outline . . . . .	6
1.5 Academic Relevance . . . . .	8
<b>2 The Conflict over Conflicts</b>	
<b>Parties, Issue Attention and Political Competition</b>	<b>11</b>
2.1 Introduction . . . . .	12
2.2 Issues and Political Competition . . . . .	12
2.2.1 The Societal 'Bottom Up' Perspective . . . . .	13
2.2.2 The Agenda-Setting 'Top Down' Perspective . . . . .	14
2.2.3 Summary . . . . .	16
2.3 Issue Attention Strategies – A New Framework . . . . .	17
2.3.1 External Party System Pressures . . . . .	18
2.3.2 Internal Party Organizational Structures . . . . .	23
2.4 Measuring Issue Attention . . . . .	28
2.4.1 Data Sources . . . . .	28
2.4.2 Case Selection . . . . .	28
2.5 Summary . . . . .	29
<b>3 Setting the Agenda or Responding to the Agenda?</b>	
<b>Explaining the Degree of Responsiveness to Competitors</b>	
<b>in Parties' Issue Agendas</b>	<b>30</b>
3.1 Introduction . . . . .	31
3.2 Issue Responsiveness to Rival Parties . . . . .	33
3.2.1 Challenger versus Mainstream & Activists versus Leaders . . . . .	35
3.2.2 The Cultural and the Economic Issue Domain . . . . .	38
3.3 Data & Operationalization . . . . .	38
3.4 Model Specification . . . . .	45

3.4.1	Reverse Causality & Omitted Variable Bias . . . . .	48
3.5	Results . . . . .	49
3.6	Discussion . . . . .	55
<b>4</b>	<b>Appealing Broadly or Narrowing Down?</b>	
	<b>Explaining the Scope of Parties' Issue Agendas</b>	<b>58</b>
4.1	Introduction . . . . .	59
4.2	The Politics of Issue Attention Diversity . . . . .	61
4.2.1	Experience in Government and Issue Attention Diversity . .	62
4.2.2	Intra Party Politics and Issue Attention Diversity . . . . .	64
4.2.3	External Shocks and Issue Attention Diversity . . . . .	66
4.3	Data and Methodology . . . . .	68
4.4	Results . . . . .	73
4.5	Discussion . . . . .	81
<b>5</b>	<b>Adaptation or Dismissal?</b>	
	<b>The Impact of Green, Far Right and Eurosceptic</b>	
	<b>Issue Entrepreneurs on the Agendas of Other Parties</b>	<b>84</b>
5.1	Introduction . . . . .	85
5.2	Issue Entrepreneurial Strategies . . . . .	87
5.3	Issue Entrepreneurs & their Impact on Rival Parties . . . . .	89
5.4	Data & Operationalization . . . . .	92
5.4.1	Dependent Variables . . . . .	93
5.4.2	Independent Variables . . . . .	94
5.5	Estimation Technique . . . . .	98
5.6	Results . . . . .	100
5.6.1	Robustness Checks . . . . .	104
5.6.2	Omitted Variable Bias . . . . .	105
5.7	Discussion . . . . .	106
<b>6</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>108</b>
6.1	Introduction . . . . .	109
6.2	Summary of the Main Findings . . . . .	110
6.3	Implications & Academic Contributions . . . . .	112
6.4	Suggestions for Future Research . . . . .	118
<b>A</b>	<b>Appendix Chapter 2</b>	<b>120</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>Appendix Chapter 3</b>	<b>127</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>Appendix Chapter 4</b>	<b>132</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>Appendix Chapter 5</b>	<b>135</b>
	<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>149</b>



---

## List of Figures

---

2.1	Number of Observations for Challenger and Mainstream Parties . . .	22
2.2	Intra Party Balance of Power across Party Families . . . . .	25
2.3	Distribution of Intra Party Balance of Power across Party Types . . .	27
3.1	Salience of the Economic and Cultural Issue Domains in Party Man- ifestos, 1950-2013 . . . . .	42
3.2	Distribution of Changes in Salience of the Economic and Cultural Issue Domains . . . . .	47
3.3	Marginal Effects of Changes in Systemic Salience of Issue Domains for Challenger vs Mainstream parties and Mainstream Opposition vs Mainstream Government Parties . . . . .	52
3.4	Marginal Effects of Changes in Systemic Salience on Parties' Issue Salience across Different Levels of Intra Party Balance of Power . . .	54
4.1	Issue Attention Diversity by Party Type, 1950-2013 . . . . .	70
4.2	Marginal Effects of Challenger Party and Mainstream Government Party Status on Issue Attention Diversity across Different Levels of Intra Party Balance of Power . . . . .	76
4.3	Marginal Effects of Vote Loss, Office Exclusion and the Strength of Challenger Parties on Mainstream Parties' Issue Attention Diversity across Different Levels of Intra Party Balance of Power . . . . .	80
5.1	Attention to European integration, Environmental and Immigration Issues in Party Manifestos, 1950-2013 . . . . .	88
5.2	Importance of EU, Green and Immigration Issues to Parties . . . . .	91
5.3	Marginal Effects of Support for Issue Entrepreneurs on Other Par- ties' Issue Emphases . . . . .	103
D.1	Marginal Effects of Support for Issue Entrepreneurs on Mainstream Parties' Issue Emphases . . . . .	140
D.2	Marginal Effects Plot (EU model Including Intra-Party Dissent) . . .	142
D.3	Marginal Effects of Support for Issue Entrepreneurs on Other Par- ties' Issue Emphases (Log-Transformed Models) . . . . .	145
D.4	Marginal Effects of Support for Issue Entrepreneurs on Other Par- ties' Issue Emphases (Models with Lagged Dependent Variables) . .	148

---

## List of Tables

---

2.1	Concepts of Niche Parties Compared . . . . .	20
2.2	Contingency Table of Niche-Mainstream Conceptualizations based on Party Family across Mainstream-Challenger Framework . . . . .	22
3.1	Variables Included in the Economic and Cultural Issue Domains . . .	40
3.2	Operationalization of the Variables . . . . .	44
3.3	Descriptive Statistics . . . . .	45
3.4	Pooled Time Series Regressions of Changes in Parties' Issue Em- phases, 1950-2013 . . . . .	50
3.5	Pooled Time Series Regressions of Changes in Mainstream Parties' Issue Emphases, 1950-2013 . . . . .	51
3.6	Pooled Time Series Regressions of Changes in Parties' Issue Em- phases, 1950-2013 . . . . .	53
4.1	Operationalization of the Variables . . . . .	72
4.2	Descriptive Statistics . . . . .	73
4.3	Pooled Time Series Regressions of Political Parties' Issue Attention Diversity, 1950-2013 . . . . .	75
4.4	Pooled Time Series Regressions of Absolute Changes in Mainstream Parties' Issue Attention Diversity, 1950-2013 . . . . .	79
5.1	Green, Far Right & Eurosceptic Issue Entrepreneurs . . . . .	95
5.2	Descriptive Statistics . . . . .	99
5.3	Operationalization of the Variables . . . . .	99
5.4	Regression Models Predicting Party Emphases of Green, Immigra- tion and European Integration Issues . . . . .	101
A.1	List of Parties . . . . .	121
B.1	Granger Reverse Causality Models . . . . .	128
B.2	Models 1-4 Re-Estimated with Vote-Weighted Systemic Salience ( <i>w</i> )	129
B.3	Models 5-8 Re-Estimated with Vote-Weighted Systemic Salience ( <i>w</i> )	130
B.4	Models 9-12 Re-Estimated with Vote-Weighted Systemic Salience ( <i>w</i> )	131
C.1	Models 1-4 Re-Estimated with Log-Transformations . . . . .	133
C.2	Models 5-8 Re-Estimated with Log-Transformations . . . . .	134
D.1	Regression Models Predicting Party Emphases of Green, Immigra- tion and European Integration Issues (Interactive Models) . . . . .	136
D.2	Model 3 Re-Estimated with CMP Data . . . . .	137

D.3	Regression Models Predicting Mainstream Party Emphases of Green, Immigration and European Integration Issues . . . . .	138
D.4	Regression Models Predicting Mainstream Party Emphases of Green, Immigration and European Integration Issues (Interactive Models) . .	139
D.5	Model 3 Re-Estimated Controlling for Intra-Party Dissent . . . . .	141
D.6	Regression Models Predicting Party Emphases of Green, Immigration and European Integration Issues (Log-Transformed Models) . .	143
D.7	Regression Models Predicting Party Emphases of Green, Immigration and European Integration Issues (Interactive Models with Log-Transformations) . . . . .	144
D.8	Regression Models Predicting Party Emphases of Green, Immigration and European Integration Issues (Models with Lagged Dependent Variables) . . . . .	146
D.9	Regression Models Predicting Party Emphases of Green, Immigration and European Integration Issues (Interactive Models with Lagged Dependent Variables) . . . . .	147



---

## Introduction

---

“ To speak of politics is to speak of political issues, almost invariably. We speak of them as if we knew of them. But we truly do not. We do not know why they arise, why one question rather than another comes to seem important, why it happens at a particular time, rather than another, why some last, why most do not. ”

---

Edward G. Carmines & James A. Stimson, *Issue Evolution. Race and the Transformation of American Politics*, 1989 (p.3)

## 1.1 The Puzzle

SCHOLARS, JOURNALISTS AND OTHER (professional) observers of politics tend to explain elections and their outcomes by referring to the issues that have come to dominate the political system at that particular time. The 2002 general election in the Netherlands, which saw a newly formed populist radical right party becoming the second largest party, should be understood in the context of the dominance of issues related to asylum seekers and the integration of immigrants in the country (van Holsteyn and Irwin, 2003). Grasping the 1998 federal election in Germany, which produced the most significant vote swing between the major parties since the 1950s, scholars have pointed out the failed attempts by the Christian democratic party to shift attention to European Union matters (Pulzer, 1999). Examining the Labour Party’s poor electoral performance in the 2005 general election in the United Kingdom, as compared to the previous cycle, Clarke et al. (2006, p.4) point out the “radically different issue agendas at play in the 2001 and 2005 elections.”

To understand contemporary politics we need to understand why certain issues dominate political agendas and why other issues remain under the surface. As the quote above by Carmines and Stimson (1989) highlights, however, political science seems to have fallen short in providing answers to basic questions of how political issues emerge and become salient. Recent work has echoed this critique. For example, de Vries and Hobolt (2012, p.247) argue that “we have a limited understanding of how new issues become salient and how changes within the dimensional structure of party and electoral competition occur, especially in multi-party systems.” In a similar vein, Tavits and Potter (2015, p.744) claim that “little is known about whether and how parties themselves attempt to shape the

competitive space to their own advantage by manipulating the salience of certain issues.” Why have immigration matters been among the most hotly debated issues in many western European countries, and why, up until recently, have they not been of much concern to political parties in Sweden (Odmalm, 2011; Dahlström and Esaiasson, 2011)? How is that euthanasia became an important issue in Dutch and Belgian politics, but is usually perceived a ‘non-issue’ in Denmark (Green-Pedersen, 2007a)? Why did the Fukushima disaster result in the politicization of nuclear energy policy in Germany (Meyer and Schoen, 2015) while political elites in France, which has more nuclear power plants, hardly responded at all (van de Wardt, 2014a, p.2)? Why have political parties long been so reluctant to address European integration issues in national election campaigns (van der Eijk and Franklin, 2004)?

The literature offers two distinct analytical frameworks that take up questions of how policy issues become salient in the political arena, and how this relates to political parties. The first is a societal ‘bottom up’ view, building on the seminal contribution by Lipset and Rokkan (1976). It perceives parties as “agents of conflict” (Lipset and Rokkan, 1976, p.3), vehicles translating social cleavages into the party system. The second is a ‘top down’ perspective, which ascribes a much more active role to parties and politicians. In this view, the selection of politicized issues is not a function of ‘structural variables’ such as societal cleavages, but is explained by the electoral strategies of political elites. Carmines and Stimson (1986, p.6) explain: “strategic politicians play the most obvious and perhaps most influential role in determining the relative competition among political issues [as they] instinctively understand which issues benefit them and their party and which not.” The “trick”, then, is to emphasize the former and downplay the importance of the latter. This idea of selective emphasis of preferred issues, developed further by Robertson (1976), Budge and Farlie (1983) and in Petrocik’s (1996) issue ownership theory, constitutes the core of salience theory.

Inspired by salience theory, empirical studies of issue attention exhibit a strong one-sided focus on parties’ incentives to selectively emphasize issues that are beneficial to them. Green-Pedersen and Mortensen (2014, p.2) conclude that the literature “has been slow to move beyond the idea that parties have issues they prefer.” As a result, important questions with regard to other components of parties’ issue attention strategies have been left unexplored. This dissertation singles out three such aspects.

First, selective emphasis theories largely ignore that parties are constrained in their issue attention strategies by the actions of their competitors; in other words, that parties interact in issue competition. Empirical studies have exposed that issue overlap – that is, partisan elites addressing the same issues –, actually occurs relatively frequently (Damore, 2004; Sigelman and Buell, 2004). Parties differ, however, in the extent to which they follow other parties’ issue attention; i.e. in the extent to which they *set the agenda or respond to the agenda*.

Second, parties might be tempted to go beyond addressing the issues on which they have traditionally enjoyed advantages over their competitors. Vote-,

and office-, seeking incentives might push them towards reaching out to voters beyond their core constituencies (Somer-Topcu, 2015). Issue diversification – that is: adding issues to the agenda in the hope of appealing to a broader electorate –, is an attractive strategy for parties to achieve this goal. Selective emphasis theories, however, have little to say as to why parties would *appeal broadly or narrow down their issue appeals*.

Third, selective emphasis theories are static in nature, as they expect parties to constantly emphasize ‘their’ issues. As such, these theories are not very well equipped to account for the emergence of new issues. ‘Issue entrepreneurs’, however, seek to innovate political markets by bringing new issues to the fore (de Vries and Hobolt, 2012). The question, then, is how other parties in the system strategically adjust their issue attention in response; whether they *adapt to the new agenda or dismiss it*.

This dissertation focuses on these three aspects of parties’ issue attention strategies: (1) the degree of responsiveness to competitors (*settling the agenda or responding to the agenda?*), (2) the scope of issue attention (*appealing broadly or narrowing down?*), and (3) the degree of innovation (*adaption to-, or dismissal of new issues?*). These components of parties’ issue attention strategies can be subsumed under a generic research question, which will be introduced in the next section. This introductory chapter then proceeds by highlighting the main argument of the dissertation and by sketching the dissertation outline before it closes with a brief reflection upon the academic relevance of this study.

## 1.2 The Research Question

This dissertation can be located within the top down perspective on issue politicization. Its starting point is the assumption that partisan elites strategically manipulate the salience of issues in an attempt to shape the political space in which they compete to their own advantage. This dissertation contributes to the literature by providing an answer to the following research question:

*To what extent do external party system pressures and internal party organizational structures impact parties’ issue attention strategies in western European multi-party systems?*

Three components of this research question stand out: (1) parties’ issue attention strategies, (2) external party system pressures and (3) internal party organizational structures. In the following these three components are briefly elaborated upon.



## 1.3 The Argument

### *Issue Attention Strategies*

Issue attention strategies, also referred to as issue salience strategies, are conceptualized as parties' selective emphasis of policy issues. This dissertation contributes to the literature by going beyond the notion that parties only face incentives to highlight their preferred issues. The argument is that by focusing solely on the notion that partisan elites emphasize issues they deem favourable and deemphasize issues that help their competitors, the literature has overlooked other important features of parties' issue attention strategies. This dissertation focuses on: (1) the degree to which a party responds to the issue attention of its competitors, (2) the degree to which a party's attention is confined to a few issues only or, rather, whether a party offers a broad issue agenda to voters, and (3) to what extent a party seeks to innovate its issue agenda.

### *External Party System Pressures*

What explains the dynamics of parties' issue attention strategies? This dissertation considers, firstly, the role of party system pressures, which originate externally from the party system and a party's strategic position within that system. Party system pressures are conceptualized in two ways: (1) parties' strategic position within the party system as being a mainstream government, mainstream opposition or challenger party, and (2) the degree of electoral support for 'issue entrepreneurs.'

The insight that parties' strategic positions within the party system affect their issue strategies derives from the classical top down perspective on issue politicization. Generally, a distinction is made between 'political winners' and 'political losers'. Winners, the argument is, have an incentive to maintain the status quo of the issue space while political losers seek to advance their position within the system by attempting to upset the underlying dimensional structure of political competition (see for example Carmines and Stimson, 1986, 1989). The distinction between winners and losers corresponds to the party in- and out-of-government in two-party systems. The winner-loser distinction is, however, more complex in multiparty systems where coalition governments are the norm (Hobolt and Karp, 2010). Following other recent studies that have applied insights from the top down framework to explain issue competition in multi-party systems, this dissertation therefore adopts the threefold distinction between mainstream opposition parties, mainstream government parties and challenger parties (see for example de Vries and Hobolt, 2012). Challenger parties are parties that have never been in government. Having not (yet) been able to push through their policy ideals by participating in a governing coalition and having not (yet) enjoyed the 'spoils' of office, they are the political losers in multi-party systems and have an incentive to change the issue space. Mainstream parties, on the other hand, are the political winners as they regularly switch between opposition and government. As such, they have an incentive to maintain the status quo of the political system. *External*

*party system pressures*, thus, refer to a party's strategic position in the competitive party system as being a mainstream government, a mainstream opposition or a challenger party.

However, this dissertation does not only consider parties' strategic positions in the party system, it also conceptualizes external party system pressures as the degree of electoral support for 'issue entrepreneurs'. 'Issue entrepreneurs' are parties that predominantly campaign on new issue dimensions, or that take outlying positions on existing policy dimensions. The argument is that increasing electoral support for such a party puts a pressure on other parties to adjust their issue strategies. This insight derives from classical spatial models of party competition (Downs, 1957), in which it is assumed that parties re-position themselves in response to the emergence of new parties. The expectation as put forward in this dissertation is that parties not only change their policy positions, but also systematically adjust their issue salience strategies following the electoral success of 'issue entrepreneurs'.

#### *Internal Party Organizational Structures*

The second factor that is considered in this dissertation as affecting issue attention is a party's internal organizational structure. In addition to external pressures originating from the party system, internal party politics also matters for how parties strategically behave in terms of their selective emphasis of issues. Specifically, the extent to which organizational structures within parties favour the party leadership, or rather the activist base, is examined. Following dominant theories of party behavior, it is assumed that party leaders mainly seek to satisfy vote- and office-seeking motivations whereas party activists are more concerned with policy goals (see for example Müller and Strøm, 1999). Other studies have shown how the internal balance of power between party leaders and the activist base is relevant for parties' positioning on a generalized left-right dimension (Schumacher, de Vries and Vis, 2013). Building on these insights, this dissertation maintains that the issue salience strategies of leadership-oriented parties differ from parties with more powerful internal activist bases.

## 1.4 Dissertation Outline

The core of this dissertation consists of three empirical chapters, each dealing with one of the three components of parties' issue salience strategies as identified above. The dissertation opens with a chapter that briefly describes the literature on issue competition and lays out the theoretical framework unifying the subsequent analytical chapters. Brief synopses of the chapters are provided below.

#### *Chapter 2: The Conflict over Conflicts*

Chapter 2 presents an overview of the literature on issue competition. It describes the role of political parties in the 'conflict over conflicts' and discusses why the dissertation singles out the three components of issue salience strategies

that are then analysed in the three subsequent empirical chapters. It explains the focus on internal party organizational structures, on the one hand, and external party system pressures on the other hand, devoting attention to the mainstream-challenger framework and how it relates to other party classifications, such as the mainstream-niche distinction (Meguid, 2005). The chapter closes with discussing the case selection and the data sources.

### *Chapter 3: Setting the Agenda or Responding to the Agenda?*

The first empirical chapter analyses 'party interaction' in issue competition. It shows that parties are, generally speaking, responsive to the agendas of their competitors. Changes in the systemic salience of issue domains, that is the extent to which other parties emphasize groups of issues, significantly impact individual parties' issue attention. However, not all parties are equally responsive. Experience in government coalitions should make mainstream parties more 'sensitive' towards their competitive environment whereas challenger parties, on the other hand, push forward their own agendas and ignore shifts in the systemic salience of issue domains. Furthermore, party leaders perceive the need for their party to respond to competitors and 'ride the wave' of the party system agenda more strongly than do party activists. Activists are mainly driven by policy-seeking motivations and would like to see the party maintain its focus on its traditional policy agenda. The chapter employs regression techniques which indicate tentative support for these theoretical expectations. The results also suggest differences in issue responsiveness to competitors when comparing the economic and the cultural issue domain.

### *Chapter 4: Appealing Broadly or Narrowing Down?*

Chapter 4 deals with the scope of parties' issue agendas. Why do political parties in some election campaigns offer a broad and encompassing policy agenda to voters, whereas at other times they confine their policy appeals and pursue a narrow agenda focusing on a few issues only? By addressing this question, the chapter aims to advance our understanding of the politics of 'issue attention diversity'. The argument is that challenger parties, losers in the current system, seek to change the political status quo by focusing on a few issues only, hence presenting a confined agenda. Mainstream parties have an incentive to reinforce existing patterns of competition and thus distribute their attention across a wide range of issues. Moreover, mainstream parties change the scope of their agenda when they are confronted with electoral losses or when they are excluded from office. The extent to which parties respond to these external stimuli, however, depends on intra-party politics. Party leaders seek to satisfy vote- and office-seeking motivations and 'appeal broadly', whereas activists want the party to 'speak to the base' and narrow down its issue appeals. These theoretical expectations are empirically tested.

*Chapter 5: Adaptation or Dismissal?*

This final empirical chapter deals with innovations in political issue-markets. It examines how parties respond to the pressure to address new issues, induced by the electoral success of issue entrepreneurs. When do parties engage in political competition on issue dimensions promoted by these issue entrepreneurs, and when do they dismiss their appeals? This chapter seeks to contribute to our understanding of the dynamics of the issue space in European democracies by examining the impact of electoral support for green, far right and Eurosceptic parties on the issue agendas of other parties. The empirical analyses highlight two things. First, in addition to green and far right support, Eurosceptic party success also provokes other parties to adjust their issue salience strategies. Specifically, parties adapt to the Eurosceptic challenger by addressing European integration issues more strongly. Second, this effect is conditional and depends on the salience the challengers themselves attach to the issue. If Eurosceptic parties regard European integration issues as particularly important, other parties adapt and shift salience to this issue dimension. For green and far right parties, who uniformly regard 'their' issues as highly important, such a conditional effect is absent.

*Chapter 6: Conclusion*

The concluding chapter summarizes the most important findings of the separate empirical chapters and discusses their academic and societal relevance. The chapter concludes by pointing to interesting avenues for future research.

## 1.5 Academic Relevance

The separate empirical chapters each make specific contributions to the academic literature. These will be discussed in the respective chapters, and will be summarized in the concluding chapter. This dissertation offers, in addition, three overarching contributions to the scholarly literature on party competition and issue attention in established democracies.

First, this dissertation goes beyond the notion of selective emphasis – that is, the notion that parties have incentives to selectively emphasize the issues on which they enjoy competitive advantages while they have an interest in downplaying the importance of issues that might benefit their competitors. This idea underpins much of the extant literature on issue competition. Recent work has argued that the issue competition literature suffers from a “one-sided theoretical focus”, a result of which is that studies “have been slow to move beyond the idea that parties have issues they prefer” (Green-Pedersen and Mortensen, 2014, p.1-2). This dissertation offer a contribution to the literature by highlighting three additional components of issue salience strategies that have received relatively little attention in the empirical literature on party behaviour: parties' inclination to respond to

the issue appeals of other parties, the scope of parties' issue agendas and parties' incentives to highlight new issues.

In addition, this dissertation systemically explains variation in the extent to which parties pursue these issue attention strategies. External party system pressures, conceptualized as parties' relative positions in the competitive party system, are considered an important explanatory factor in this regard. This dissertation shows how the threefold distinction between mainstream government, mainstream opposition and challenger parties matters when it comes to differences in issue attention strategies across parties. The challenger-mainstream has been introduced in other recent studies (see for example de Vries and Hobolt, 2012), but has been mainly used to explain parties' incentives to campaign on European integration matters. Challenger parties, the argument goes, seek to upset the political status quo by highlighting European integration issues in an attempt to increase the underlying dimensionality of the political issue space (de Vries and Hobolt, 2012; Hobolt and de Vries, 2015; van de Wardt, de Vries and Hobolt, 2014; van de Wardt, 2015). This dissertation broadens the scope of inquiry and argues that mainstream government, mainstream opposition and challenger parties pursue different issue salience strategies, induced by the different incentives they face resulting from their relative position in the competitive party system. As such, the second overarching contribution emerges from advancing the applicability of this behavioural classification of political parties in multi-party settings.

A third overarching contribution comes with the assessment of the impact of parties' internal organizational structures on their issue strategies. Increasingly, studies of party behaviour seek to 'open the black box' of political parties, acknowledging that intra party politics precedes, and affects, parties' policy proposals, election manifestos and strategic political choices. In the introduction to a recent special issue about the causes and consequences of internal party politics, Polk and Kölln (2016, p.1) write: "parties may be collective entities but internal factions, groups and divisions structure those entities." A key aspect of contemporary intra party research concerns "the electoral and other ramifications of internal party tensions or divisions" (Polk and Kölln, 2016, p.1). Recent research has indeed taken up such questions, and has examined the impact of intra party politics on party policy positioning. Schumacher, de Vries and Vis (2013), for example, posit that parties in which activist dominate respond to changes in the positions of party voters while leadership-dominated party organizations induce responsiveness to the mean voter position. Lehrer (2012), adopting a similar line of argumentation, maintains that inclusive parties – parties in which rank-and-file members select leaders – respond to the issue positions of party members whereas exclusive parties – parties in which a small group of officials select leaders – respond to median voter shifts. These studies provide valuable insights in the effects of intra party dynamics on parties' policy positioning on generalized left-right dimensions. This dissertation adds to the literature by highlighting that internal organizational structures are relevant as well for parties' issue attention strategies.

The larger debates to which this dissertation speaks, though, relate to questions of why certain issues become the focus of political conflict in party systems whereas others are of minor importance or remain largely ignored. These questions are relevant beyond the academic sphere, and this dissertation aims to provide a contribution by enhancing our understanding of political parties' issue attention strategies in western European countries.

---

The Conflict over Conflicts

Parties, Issue Attention and Political Competition

---

“ There are billions of potential conflicts in any modern society, but only a few become significant. The reduction of the number of conflicts in an essential part of politics. Politics deals with the domination and subordination of conflicts. A democratic society is able to survive because it manages conflict by establishing priorities among a multitude of potential conflicts. ”

---

Elmer E. Schattschneider, *The Semisovereign People. A Realist's View of Democracy in America*, 1960 (p.66)

## 2.1 Introduction

POLITICS IS ESSENTIALLY CONCERNED with the management of conflicts. The above quote by Schattschneider (1960) highlights the importance of this notion: democratic societies survive because they prioritize certain conflicts over others. But how does this occur, establishing priorities among the many conflicts in democracies? What determines the selection of salient issues? And what role do political parties play in this process?

This chapter consists of three parts. The first part (section 2.2) briefly discusses and summarizes the literature on issue competition. The second part (section 2.3) introduces this study's theoretical framework. It discusses the three components of parties' issue salience strategies that are the focus of this dissertation: (1) the extent to which parties respond to the issue attention of their competitors, (2) the scope of parties' issue agendas and (3) the extent to which parties innovate their platforms. In addition, it discusses the two factors that are considered as crucially influencing parties' issue salience strategies: (1) external party system pressures and (2) internal party organizational structures. The third part (section 2.4) puts forward some remarks on measurement and case-selection before this chapter closes with a brief summary.

## 2.2 Issues and Political Competition

Issue competition refers to the struggle between political parties over which issues should dominate the political agenda (Green-Pedersen, 2007b). The literature dealing with the relation between issues, parties and political competition can be



divided into two perspectives, following Colomer and Puglisi (2005). The first is the societal 'bottom up' view, the starting point of which is Lipset and Rokkan's (1976) study of the persisting influence of social cleavages on western European party systems. The second view can be labelled the 'top down' perspective, and emphasizes the strategic actions of political elites in the selection of salient issues. Although this dissertation can be located within this second perspective, the bottom up view will be briefly discussed first.

### 2.2.1 The Societal 'Bottom Up' Perspective

Lipset and Rokkan (1976) perceive the emergence and development of western European party systems a result of societal cleavages, which are in turn produced by revolutions. The national revolutions in Europe created centre-periphery and state-church cleavages while industrial revolutions led to the rural-urban and workers-employers divisions. Political parties, the issues they address and the party systems of Europe as a whole reflect these societal cleavage structures. This view does not leave much room for the strategic actions of political elites in the process of translating societal divisions into the political system. Therefore, the Lipset-Rokkan perspective, and similar studies such as Bartolini (2000), have been labelled a form of "sociological determinism" (Colomer and Puglisi, 2005, p.503).<sup>1</sup>

Next to these remote historical events, more short term factors are as well considered in the bottom up perspective. Green-Pedersen and Krogstrup (2008, p.612) identify three forms of "societal inputs" to the political agenda: the magnitude of societal problems, shifts in mass media attention and public opinion shifts. This list can be complemented with focusing events that draw political attention to specific issues (Birkland, 1998).

Problem magnitude refers to the existence, magnitude and development of public policy problems. After all, "parties do not pay attention to non-existent problems" (Green-Pedersen and Krogstrup, 2008, p.612). Problem magnitude as a form of societal input to the political agenda implies that variation in the magnitude of a public policy problem is related to the degree of political attention to an issue. For example, increases in the inflow of immigrants in a country, as an indication of the magnitude of the 'problem' of immigration, would then correlate with increasing attention to immigration issues in political agendas.

Mass media attention is a second factor considered among the societal inputs to the political agenda. Agenda setting effects of the mass media have long been identified in the literature (McCombs and Shaw, 1972). The basic argument is that "the salience of a particular issue on the public agenda is a function [...] of its salience on the media agenda" (McCombs and Zhu, 1995, p.496). However, the relationship between media attention and issue selection by politicians is likely to be of reciprocal nature, and several studies show that party agendas drive media attention to issues, and not the other way around (see for example Walgrave

---

<sup>1</sup>For a contrasting view of Lipset and Rokkan's (1976) study, see Kitschelt (2007, p.541).

and van Aelst, 2006; Brandenburg, 2002). Hopmann et al. (2012, p.173) summarize: “political parties have substantial influence on which issues the news media cover during election campaigns, while the media have limited influence on party agendas”.

Third, the bottom up perspective considers the role of public opinion shifts. Dynamic representation implies that if public opinion changes, public policy will follow suit (Stimson, MacKuen and Erikson, 1995). Political parties, intermediaries between voters and their government, play a crucial role in this process. Empirical studies have established that party policy positioning indeed follows a patterns of dynamic representation – that is, parties adapt their positions on a generalized left-right dimension in response to shifts in the mean voter left-right position (Adams et al., 2004, 2006; Ezrow et al., 2011). At the same time, however, theories of ‘opinion leadership’ have argued that the correlation between party and voter positions is due to the fact that voters adopt elite policy attitudes (for a recent study see Broockman and Butler, 2015). A similar picture emerges with regard to parties’ issue attention and voters’ issue priorities. On the one hand, studies report that if the mass public prioritizes certain issues, partisan elites take these cues and respond by emphasizing these issues more strongly (Klüver and Spoon, 2014; Klüver and Sagarzazu, 2016). On the other hand, voters also take their issue concerns from politicians (Green and Hobolt, 2008; Bélanger and Meguid, 2008). Adams (2016, p.26) states that “there is extensive evidence that [...] voters reciprocally take cues from parties about which issues to prioritise – in that increasing party attention to an issue prompts increased attention to this issue in the mass public.” Hence, the literature is inconclusive as to whether causality runs from voters’ issue priorities to parties’ issue emphases or the other way around. Taking this into account, recent empirical studies leave out measures of public opinion altogether arguing that it is, in fact, endogenous to elite issue attention, the dependent variable in their models (Abou-Chadi, 2014, p.11).

Fourth, bottom up explanations stress the role of focusing events, “sudden, striking large-scale occurrences that attract political attention” (Alexandrova, 2015, p.505). Focusing events are typically natural or human made disasters (Birkland, 1998; Walgrave and Varone, 2008). Meyer and Schoen (2015) show, for example, how the aftermath of the Fukushima disaster resulted in increased attention for nuclear power policy in Germany, eventually leading to a policy shift by the government.

### 2.2.2 The Agenda-Setting ‘Top Down’ Perspective

The bottom up perspective perceives political parties and politicians to be rather passive actors. The issues they address merely reflect the societal inputs and cues they receive. By contrast, the top down perspective holds that political elites are highly influential in the selection of salient issues. Their strategic decisions determine to a large extent the issues that are being discussed in politics. But

which issues do politicians choose to focus on? How do they select the issues for their electoral campaign? Salience theory addresses these questions.

Salience theory builds on the premise that parties craft their policies by emphasizing some issues more than others. Its origins can be traced back to Stokes's (1963) important critique of spatial models of party competition.<sup>2</sup> The spatial modeling literature, originated from the classical models as put forward by Hotelling (1929) and most famously Downs (1957), assumes that there is at least one set of ordered policy alternatives that parties advocate and voters can choose between. Typically, this concerns the degree of government intervention in the economy. Leftist parties argue in favor of active involvement in the economy while parties on the right generally advocate a more modest role of the state. Since "parties formulate policies to win elections" (Downs, 1957, p.28), they have an incentive to adjust their positions approaching the median voter position on the policy continuum. Stokes (1963) argues, however, that many political issues do not involve sets of ordered policy alternatives. He distinguishes valence from positional issues. The latter involve advocacy of action from a set of alternatives whereas valence issues involve the linking of parties with conditions that are positively or negatively valued by voters. Valence issues can not be represented by Downsian spatial models that use policy dimensions with opposed ends. Corruption is often cited as a prime example, since neither voters nor candidates would ever come out in favor of corruption.

The agenda formation literature (Riker, 1982, 1986, 1993a) voices an additional critique of Downsian spatial models of electoral competition, targeting the emergence of issues. Downs (1957) assumes that the issues that make up the ideological dimension(s) in the model are determined *exogenously*. The issue space is given, and within these constraints parties strategically choose their positions. Riker (1982, 1986, 1993a) assumes by contrast that parties' positions are given and relatively fixed, as they are constrained by the bounds of political ideologies. Candidates and partisan elites, then, give salience to specific issue dimensions attempting to shape the political space to their advantage. Hence, Rikerian models *endogenize* issue selection (see also Colomer and Puglisi, 2005, p.507).

Salience theory accommodates these critique of the Downsian spatial modelling literature, arguing that parties differentiate themselves by highlighting different policy areas, rather than advocating different courses of action on a common set of issues. Robertson (1976), studying British party manifestos, finds only few specific 'pro' or 'contra' issue positions. Instead, "selective emphasis on different policies [seems] the guiding rhetorical principle" (Budge, 2015, p.762). Budge and Farlie (1983) have developed the idea of selective emphasis further, arguing that if a party has favorable issues, and if these issues come to dominate an election campaign, then this party should benefit in terms of electoral support. Such 'issue effects' can thus help to predict election outcomes (see also Budge, 2015, p.764-765).

---

<sup>2</sup>Budge (2015) provides a more extensive historical and conceptual overview of salience theory.

Budge and Farlie (1983) assume the existence of associations between parties and issues. Parties have favorable issues because in voters' minds specific issues are tied to specific parties. These associations are given and relatively fixed in Budge and Farlie's (1983) model of issue effects and election outcomes (Budge, 2015, p.766). Other approaches posit that these party-issue linkages are, in fact, shaped by parties' strategic actions. Riker's (1993*b*) theory of rhetorical interaction between politicians revolves around the principles of *dominance* and *dispersion*. According to the dominance principle, politicians should abandon an issue when their opponents win the argument. The winner, then, should continue to exploit his advantage and keep pressing the issue. The dispersion principle holds that when neither side wins the argument, both sides have an incentive to drop the issue and to bring up another issue (Riker, 1993*b*, p.81-82). As a result, politicians are engaged in a constant search for issues on which they enjoy advantages over their opponents.

Petrocik (1996) goes one step further and argues that parties can establish ownership over an issue. Some parties are in voters' minds considered better able to deal with a specific issue than other parties. For issue ownership to be established, "a history of attention, initiative, and innovation toward [the issue]" is needed (Petrocik, 1996, p.826). The Democratic party in the United States may own the issue of social welfare while Republicans have an advantage when it comes to issues related to taxes and government spending (Petrocik, Benoit and Hansen, 2003). Walgrave, Lefevere and Tresch (2012) point out that issue ownership entails two distinct dimensions. The competence dimension refers to whether parties are considered to be the 'best' to deal with an issue while the associative dimension refers to the natural or spontaneous identification of parties with issues, similar as in Budge and Farlie (1983). Candidates are expected to campaign on the issue they own, "in order to prime their salience in the decision calculus of the voters" (Petrocik, Benoit and Hansen, 2003, p.599).

### 2.2.3 Summary

Above, I have briefly summarized the two main research paradigms that deal with the selection of salient issues in politics. The bottom up perspective perceives political elites as rather passive actors in the process of issue selection and emphasizes societal inputs to the political agenda. The top down perspectives ascribes a much more active role to parties and politicians and argues that it is their actions that to a large extent determine which issues are the focus of political contest. The next section will argue that salience theory overlooks important components of parties' issue salience strategies and it will outline the three aspects of issue attention that are the focus of this study. In addition, I will argue why external party system pressures and, secondly, internal party organizational structures need to be taken into account when explaining parties' issue salience strategies.

### 2.3 Issue Attention Strategies – A New Framework

Salience theory argues that parties have issues on which they enjoy advantages over their competitors. That being so, the rational thing for parties to do is to emphasize ‘their’ issues and to downplay the importance of issues being owned by their competitors. Salience theory almost exclusively deals with parties’ incentives to focus on advantaged issues. This “one-sided theoretical focus” (Green-Pedersen and Mortensen, 2014, p.1) is problematic since it overlooks other components of the issue salience strategies pursued by parties. I identify three such components.

The first is issue overlap. Salience theory implies that different parties focus on different issues. If political elites address only their advantaged issues, and neglect those of their competitors, then “most of the time opponents do not talk about the same things” (Riker, 1993b, p.82). It is the basic claim of salience theory that parties hardly ever address the issues and policies of their opponents (see also Dolezal et al., 2014, p.59). Empirical analyses of elite issue attention, however, tell a different story. It has been shown that the election campaigns of Democratic and Republican presidential candidates in the United States quite often converge on the same issues (Sigelman and Buell, 2004; Damore, 2004, 2005), and considerable overlap exists in the issues that are being addressed by the different parties in European multiparty systems (Green-Pedersen, 2007b). Such interactions in issue competition are largely ignored by salience theories.

The second is issue diversity. Studies show how issue agendas in modern democracies have become more diverse over time (Green-Pedersen, 2007b). Salience theory, however, deals with the *nature* of the issues that parties are expected to address, and not with the *number* of issues. It has little to say regarding the scope of issue agendas, whether parties attach salience to many different issues or whether they confine their attention on a few core issues only.

The third is innovation in issue agendas. Salience theory suggest that parties’ issue attention is relatively stable. If parties continuously emphasize the issues on which they dominate, then their issue profiles should be more or less fixed. However, recent years have seen the influx of new issues in European party systems. Examples include environmental, European integration and immigration issues. Salience theory has little to say as to how innovation in issue markets occurs.

This dissertation focuses on these three components of parties’ issue attention strategies: (1) the extent to which parties respond to the issue attention of their competitors (*settling the agenda or responding to the agenda?*), (2) the scope of parties’ issue attention (*appealing broadly or narrowing down?*) and (3) the extent to which parties innovate their platforms (*adaption to-, or dismissal of new issues?*). I argue that two factors crucially impact parties’ issue attention strategies: (1) external party system pressures and (2) internal party organizational structures.

### 2.3.1 External Party System Pressures

External party system pressures refer to incentives for parties that originate externally from the party system and a party's position within this system. The empirical chapters make the following arguments:

- Chapter 5 (*adaptation or dismissal?*) conceptualizes external party system pressures as the degree of electoral support for issue entrepreneurs. Issue entrepreneurs are parties that highlight a new issue or a deviating stance on an existing issue. Support for such parties, the argument is, exerts a pressure on other parties to adapt to the agenda of the issue entrepreneurs and shift attention to the issue dimension they promote.
- Chapter 3 (*setting the agenda or responding to the agenda?*) and chapter 4 (*appealing broadly or narrowing down?*) conceptualize external party system pressures as a party's position within the party system as being a mainstream government, mainstream opposition or challenger party. The argument is that mainstream parties, switching regularly between government and opposition status, have an incentive to reinforce existing patterns of political competition as to maintain their advantageous position in the system. Challenger party occupy losing positions in the system and seek to challenge the mainstream. This implies, in terms of issue attention strategies, that challenger parties are less likely than mainstream parties to respond to the issue attention of competitors (chapter 3) and that challenger parties pursue more narrow issue profiles than do mainstream parties (chapter 4).

The argument that these two types of external party system pressures impact parties' issue strategies builds on classical theories of issue evolution and issue selection. These theories distinguish between political losers and political winners. The basic argument is that political elites who find themselves in winning positions have an incentive to maintain the status quo whereas those who are in disadvantageous positions have an incentive to upset the status quo of the political system. Carmines and Stimson's (1989) model of issue evolution revolves around the expectation that political losers seek to change the dimensional structure of political conflict by introducing policy issues that cut across, rather than reinforce, existing party divisions. Schattschneider (1960) sees a similar role for political losers in the 'displacement of one policy issue by another.' Rikerian agenda setting theories make a distinction between 'rhetoric', as the art of arguing about political issues using persuasion, and 'heresthetics', as the art of selecting issues; the latter being an especially powerful tool for political losers as they seek "some alternative that beats the current winner" (Riker, 1982, p.209).

Political losers, thus, strategically select issues to manipulate the political environment and advance their disadvantageous position within the system. The aforementioned theories are developed in the context of the two-party system in the United States and argue that the party in government is the political winner whereas the opposition party is the political loser. In Europe's multiparty systems,

governed most of the time by coalitions of parties, the distinction between winners and losers is less straightforward. Analogous to recent studies I therefore adopt the threefold distinction between mainstream government, mainstream opposition and challenger parties (see de Vries and Hobolt, 2012; Hobolt and de Vries, 2015; van de Wardt, de Vries and Hobolt, 2014; van de Wardt, 2015; Hobolt and Tilley, 2016). Challenger parties are defined as parties that have no prior experience with government participation. Having not (yet) been able to push through their policy ideals by participating in a governing coalition and having not (yet) enjoyed the 'spoils' of office, they are the political losers in multi-party systems and have an incentive to change the political status quo. Mainstream government parties are the incumbents while mainstream opposition parties have previously governed but are, in the election at hand, in opposition. Mainstream parties occupy advantageous positions because they regularly switch between opposition and government status, and as such have an incentive to maintain the status quo of the political system. As de Vries and Hobolt (2012, p.250) put it: "owing to their overall advantageous position in the system, mainstream parties have an incentive to reinforce existing patterns of political competition and the policy issues underlying them."

The challenger-mainstream framework offers a behavioural conceptualization of party types with testable implications. The expectation is that participation in government crucially affects issue agendas. The policy platforms of mainstream parties are affected by their past experience with government participation, and by their motivation to gain access to office again. As a result, mainstream parties adopt programs that stabilize the political status quo. They are therefore reluctant to mobilize around new issues and to pursue issue agendas that deviate from those of other parties, because both would harm their office aspirations. Challenger parties seek to reshape the political landscape. By the same logic, their lack of government experience and their fairly limited opportunity to gain access to office in the near future allows them to pursue more risky policy platforms (Hobolt and Tilley, 2016, p.974-975). Challenger parties oppose the political mainstream and seek to restructure politics, for example by putting new issues on the agenda (de Vries and Hobolt, 2012; Hobolt and de Vries, 2015; van de Wardt, de Vries and Hobolt, 2014; van de Wardt, 2015).

Parties change their issue strategies once they have been rewarded with access to office (de Vries and Hobolt, 2012). The reason for this is that parties take into account a 'reference point' when making strategic political decisions (van de Wardt, 2015). If parties gain access to office, government membership becomes their reference point and they will adjust their issue salience strategies accordingly. Office inclusion induces parties to switch to more mainstream issue profiles. Case studies of the impact of government membership on green parties' electoral strategies largely confirm this argument (Rihoux and Rüdiger, 2006; Bischof, 2015, p.12). As such, the challenger-mainstream framework explicates behavioural expectations as to why different parties pursue different issue attention strategies.

The challenger-mainstream framework is closely related to the concept of ‘niche’ parties. The original definition states that niche parties “reject the traditional class-based orientation of politics”, raise issues that are “not only novel, but they often do not coincide with existing lines of political division” and “differentiate themselves by limiting their issue appeals” (Meguid, 2005, p.347-348). The mainstream-challenger framework is, however, preferable for three reasons.

The first reason is that the mainstream-challenger framework is dynamic. Whereas the original niche party concept is static, based on party family designations (Meguid, 2005, 2008; Adams et al., 2006; Ezrow, 2008; Ezrow et al., 2011), the challenger-mainstream distinction is dynamic; parties cease to be challengers once they have governed. This accommodates Wagner’s (2011) argument that parties can switch between niche and mainstream issue profiles (see also van de Wardt, 2015, p.98).

Second, niche party conceptualizations employ issue salience information. Table 2.1 serves to illustrate this. In Wagner’s (2011) conceptualization, niche parties emphasize a limited number of non-economic issues while Meyer and Miller (2015) consider niche parties those parties that emphasize issues that are neglected by their competitors. Bischof (2015) adds that niche parties offer a ‘condensed’ message on these issue segments. For the purpose of this study, however, it would be tautological to explain issue attention strategies by a party type classification that is based on issue salience information (for a similar argument, see de Vries and Hobolt, 2012; van de Wardt, 2015).

TABLE 2.1 – Concepts of Niche Parties Compared

<i>Study Definition</i>	<i>Method</i>
<b>Meguid (2005, 2008)</b> (1) Reject traditional orientation of politics (2) Present novel issues (3) Limited issue appeals	Party family (green & radical right parties)
<b>Adams et al. (2006)</b> <b>Ezrow (2008)</b> <b>Ezrow et al. (2011)</b> Non-centrist or extreme ideology	Party family (green, radical right & communist parties)
<b>Wagner (2011)</b> (1) Do not emphasize economic issues (2) Emphasize a narrow range of non-economic issues	Distance to mean issue salience (dichotomous measurement)
<b>Meyer and Miller (2015)</b> Emphasize policy areas neglected by their competitors	Parties’ ‘niche-ness’ (continuous measurement)
<b>Bischof (2015)</b> (1) Emphasize issue dimensions neglected by competitors (2) Present narrow offer on these issue dimensions	‘Niche-ness’ on 2 dimensions (continuous measurement)

*Note:* Adapted from Bischof (2015) and updated.



Third, the mainstream-challenger framework is preferred over the niche party concept because it distinguishes between parties with greater parsimony and simplicity. Participation in coalition government is isolated as the defining characteristic that distinguishes between parties. This conceptualization of party types is much more straightforward than what constitutes to be a 'niche' party. In fact, "the conceptualization of niche parties lacks a common conceptual background" (Bischof, 2015, p.1), since studies disagree on the definition of niche parties and its measurement (see table 2.1). Hobolt and Tilley (2016, p.974) compare the niche party concept to the mainstream-challenger framework, and argue:

[...] measuring whether or not parties ordinarily participate in government has the advantage that it indirectly captures many of the features of niche and populist parties (the mobilisation of new issues and/or extreme positions on existing issues as well as the rejection of the political establishment) [...]. Moreover, it highlights an important aspect of challenger parties that is not captured by existing classifications, namely the degree to which a party has government responsibility for political outcomes for which they can be held to account.

For these three reasons, this dissertation adopts the challenger-framework. This is not to say, however, that the mainstream-niche and the mainstream-challenger classifications are completely independent. I categorize the party-election year observations in my dataset according to the traditional niche-mainstream classification and according to the mainstream-challenger classification. Although the two measures are strongly correlated, they do not completely overlap. Table 2.2 illustrates this. A considerable number of mainstream parties identified by Meguid (2005) and Adams et al. (2006) (parties belonging to social democratic, liberal, Christian democratic and conservative party families) are, in some election years at least, classified as challengers in my dataset. Similarly, some of the niche parties in Meguid (2005) and Adams et al. (2006) have turned into mainstream parties following the dynamic party classification.

A particular concern with the mainstream-challenger framework relates to the possibility that the emergence of challenger parties is especially apparent in specific time periods. Since challenger parties are defined based on prior experience with government participation, newly formed parties are by definition challenger parties (until they gain access to office). Many of these newly formed parties, such as green and radical right parties, have been contesting elections since the 1980s (Norris, 2005; Meguid, 2005). As such, it is likely that the number of challenger parties in this period is much higher as compared to, say, the 1950s. This could substantiate the claim that the challenger party phenomenon is characteristic for specific time periods rather than being an enduring fact of political life in European party systems. Figure 2.1 addresses this concern. It shows the number of party-election year observations for challenger and mainstream (opposition and government) parties per time period. The number of observations increases from the 1970s onwards, but the challenger-mainstream ratio remains relatively

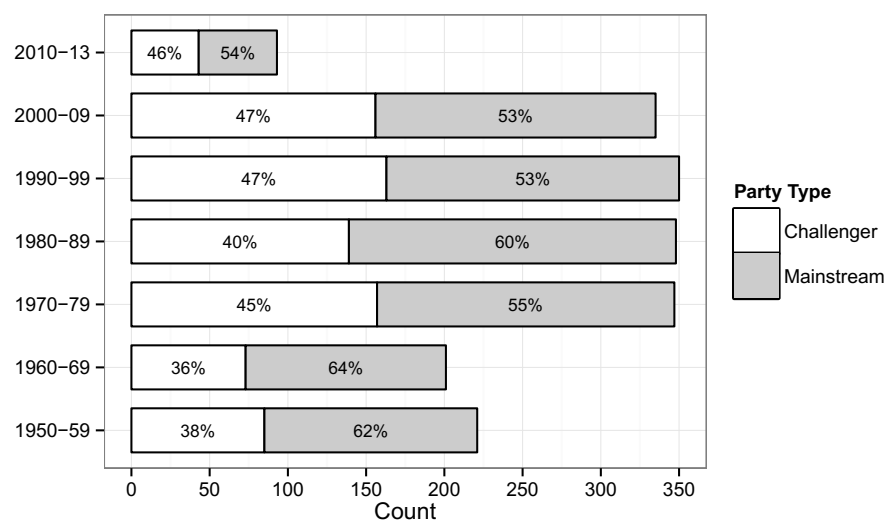
TABLE 2.2 – Contingency Table of Niche-Mainstream Conceptualizations based on Party Family across Mainstream-Challenger Framework

	Mainstream	Challenger	Total
<u>Meguid (2005, 2008)</u>			
Mainstream	74.15 (855)	25.85 (298)	100.00 (1,153)
Niche	19.78 (36)	80.22 (146)	100.00 (182)
Other	33.57 (188)	66.43 (372)	100.00 (560)
Total	56.94 (1,079)	43.06 (816)	(1,895)
Chi Square	366.6***		
*** < .01			
<u>Adams et al. (2006)</u>			
Mainstream	70.81 (866)	29.19 (357)	100.00 (1,223)
Niche	19.72 (86)	80.28 (350)	100.00 (436)
Other	53.81 (127)	46.19 (109)	100.00 (236)
Total	56.94 (1,079)	43.06 (816)	(1,895)
Chi Square	343.2***		
*** < .01			

Note: Total number of observations per categorie in parentheses.

Intepretation: 25.85% of party-election year observations counted as mainstream parties according to the conceptualization by Meguid (2005, 2008) are qualified as challenger party-election years in this study, compared to 80.22% of party-election year observations counted as niche parties.

FIGURE 2.1 – Number of Observations for Challenger and Mainstream Parties



Note: The unit of analysis is a party in an election year. The total number of observations is 1,895. The total number of challenger parties is 816 (43%). The total number of mainstream parties is 1,079 (57%).

stable. One reason for this could be the fact that some challenger parties relatively quickly managed to gain access to office, turning into mainstream parties. Quite a number of green (Rihoux and Rüdiger, 2006) and radical right parties (Akkerman, 2012) managed to enter national governments (but compare Dumont and Bäck, 2006).

### 2.3.2 Internal Party Organizational Structures

A second factor that is considered in this dissertation as affecting issue attention strategies is a party's internal organizational structure. Internal party organizational structures refer to incentives for parties that originate internally from the party organization. More specifically, the question is whether the organizational structure favours the party leadership or party activists. I refer to this as the intra party balance of power between leaders and activists. The empirical chapters make the following arguments:

- Chapter 3 (*setting the agenda or responding to the agenda?*) argues that the intra party balance of power affects the degree to which parties are responsive to the issue attention of other parties. Party leaders, driven by vote- and office-seeking motivations, perceive the need for their party to respond to competitors and 'ride the wave' of the party system agenda more strongly than do party activists. Party leaders want their party to address the issues of the day and want their party not deviate too much from the agendas of other parties as to ease post-election coalition negotiations. Party activists, driven by policy motives, are less concerned with what other parties are saying and would like their party to pursue its own policy agenda.
- Chapter 4 (*appealing broadly or narrowing down?*) argues that there is an internal struggle over the scope of parties' issue agendas within parties. Party activists want the party to focus on its original policy agenda. A focus on core issues is likely to satisfy the policy-seeking incentives of the activist base. The leadership of the party, on the other hand, is tempted by the electoral consequences of a strategy of issue diversification that reaches out to many different constituencies. Appealing broadly is likely to satisfy their vote- and office-seeking motivations.

The argument that intra party politics affect parties' issue strategies builds on existing theories of party behavior and party organization. The basic premise is that parties pursue different goals, such as increasing electoral support, gaining access to elected office or influencing specific public policies. Parties' vote, office and policy objectives are, usually, mutually conflicting and therefore trade-offs are involved when parties decide on their strategies (Strøm, 1990; Müller and Strøm, 1999). The internal organizational structure influences the way in which parties reach decisions; i.e. how they solve their collective action problems (Aldrich, 2011). Building on this insight, several studies have argued that there is a link between party organization and party's strategic behavior (Kitschelt, 1989, 1994; Pedersen,

2010, 2012; Ceron, 2012; Ware, 1992; Schumacher, de Vries and Vis, 2013; Wagner and Meyer, 2014).

Panebianco (1988) identifies party leaders and party activists as the crucial actors within parties. They have diverging preferences. Party leaders are primarily motivated by office-seeking goals whereas party activists are driven by policy objectives (Strøm, 1990; Müller and Strøm, 1999; Schlesinger, 1975; Aldrich, 2011). Party leaders are usually portrayed as pragmatic office seekers. Since they enjoy the private spoils of their party being in government, they are “primarily motivated by their expected office benefits” (Strøm, 1990, p.574). Activists, on the other hand, invest time, effort and sometimes money in the party in order to change public policies. If leaders are “careerists”, to speak with Panebianco (1988), then activists are “believers.”

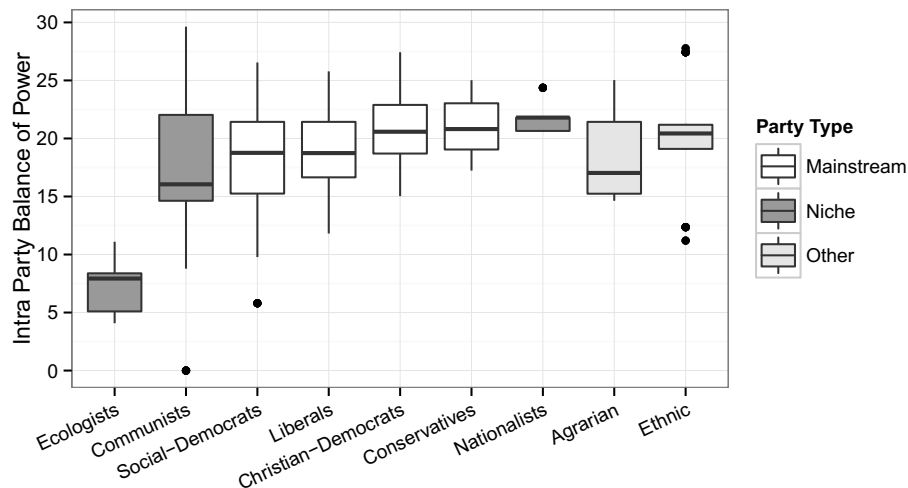
Consequently, leaders and activists have different perceptions of the trade-offs involved in parties’ decisions between conflicting strategic goals. Leaders are more pragmatic and have wide “policy limits” (Pedersen, 2012, p.901). They are willing to sacrifice policy objectives in order to gain access to office. Activists are more rigid and more likely to let policy objectives prevail over vote- or office-seeking incentives. Müller and Strøm (1999, p.10) phrase it as follows:

[if a party’s] platform contains everything that the hard-core activists want, then it will probably cause the party to fare poorly among the regular voters. On the other hand, an electorally optimal platform may imply policy sacrifices that are hard for the party faithful to swallow.

Chapter 3 and chapter 4 build on this logic to explain parties’ issue attention strategies. I locate parties on a continuum indicating whether the organizational structures favor party leadership or the activist base. Leadership dominated parties are more likely to respond to office-seeking incentives while activist dominated parties are more likely to respond to policy-seeking incentives. Schumacher, de Vries and Vis (2013) adopt a similar line of argumentation to explain parties’ policy positioning: if leaders are powerful, parties respond to shifts in the mean voter position as this is likely to result in electoral advantages and access to office, if activists have more of a say, parties respond to the shifts in the positions of their supporters, in line with policy objectives. Similarly, I argue that parties in which the leadership is powerful let vote- and office-seeking incentives prevail and are more responsive to the issue attention of competitor parties (chapter 3) and are more likely to pursue broad appeal strategies (chapter 4). Activist-dominated parties, by contrast, are more concerned with their own agendas. A party of this kind is less likely to respond to rival parties, and presents agendas more confined in scope, as they focus on their core issues.

As to get a sense of the variation in intra party organizational structures, figure 2.2 displays box plots of the variable indicating the intra party balance of power per party family. Higher scores on the variable indicate more power for the party leadership. Both across and within party families, considerable variation in party organization is observed. Ecologist parties tend to have intra party

FIGURE 2.2 – Intra Party Balance of Power across Party Families



*Note:* The y-axis depicts scores on the intra party balance of power variable, with higher scores indicating more power for the leadership, for the different party families as shown on the x-axis. The party family designations are taken from the party manifesto data (Volkens et al., 2014), the niche-mainstream classification follows Adams et al. (2006).

structures favouring the activist base, while communist parties are more oriented to the leadership. Nationalist parties' internal structures gives even more leeway to their leaders. These parties, often grouped together as niche parties (Adams et al., 2006; Ezrow, 2008; Ezrow et al., 2011), are in terms of internal organizational features thus rather diverse. The data also reveals variation across, and within, the parties usually classified as mainstream parties. Christian-democrats and conservatives have party organizations that lend on average more power to party leaders as compared to liberal and social democratic parties.

How does variation in internal party organizational structures relate to the mainstream-challenger framework? This is an important question since it is likely that the internal organizations of many of the newly formed challenger parties are less well-structured and established as compared to those of mainstream parties. As a result, one would find challenger parties to be especially internally dominated by party activists. Employing both sets of variables to explain parties' issue attention strategies would consequently lead to overfitting in the statistical models. Figure 2.3 therefore shows the distribution of the internal balance of power variable for all parties and for subsets including challenger and mainstream parties only. The figure indicates that party organization exhibits meaningful variation both across challenger parties and across mainstream parties.

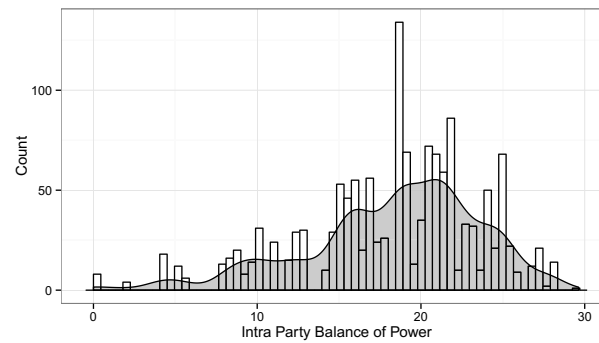
It is important to note here that chapter 5 does not incorporate an argument stressing the role of internal party organizational structures. Chapter 5 examines how parties respond to increasing electoral support for issue entrepreneurs. Do

parties adapt to the new agenda and shift attention to the issue dimension promoted by issue entrepreneurs or do parties dismiss the new agenda and downplay the importance of the new issue? For two reasons this chapter deviates from the other empirical chapters in this dissertation. First, the theoretical interest of the chapter is with the effect of electoral support for issue entrepreneurs on the agendas of all other parties. Such a focus on average effects is in line with the literature in this field (Abou-Chadi, 2014; Spoon, Hobolt and de Vries, 2014). Hence, the hypotheses generated in chapter 5 do not explicate differences between activist and leadership dominated parties. Second, the empirical strategy in chapter 5 is to include party-level fixed effects in the regression models. Since the available measure for the intra party balance of power is time invariant, the inclusion of this variable in the models is ruled out.<sup>3</sup>

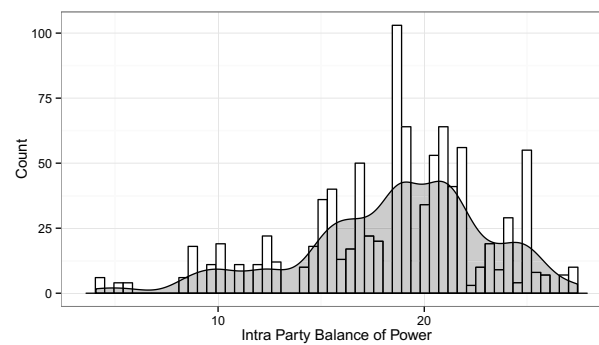
---

<sup>3</sup>The time invariant measure of the intra party balance of power would drop out of the equation as there would be perfect correlation with the time invariant party dummy variables.

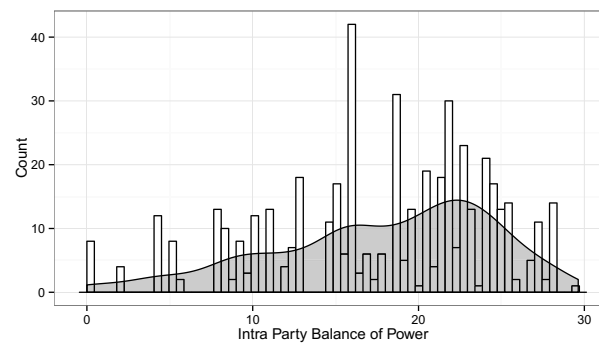
FIGURE 2.3 – Distribution of Intra Party Balance of Power across Party Types



(a) All parties (n=1,408)



(b) Mainstream parties (n=926)



(c) Challenger parties (n=482)

*Note:* The figures show the distribution of the intra party balance of power variable. The shaded area under the solid line indicates the Kernel density plot.

## 2.4 Measuring Issue Attention

This section presents a brief discussion on the data sources used in the empirical chapters, and it puts forward the case selection and time period under review.

### 2.4.1 Data Sources

Issue attention strategies are in the three empirical papers measured using data from the Manifesto Project (sometimes also referred to in this dissertation as ‘Party Manifesto Data’) (MRG-CMP-MARPOR) (Volkens et al., 2014; Klingemann et al., 2006; Budge et al., 2001). Chapter 5, in addition, also employs data from the Chapel Hill Expert Surveys (CHES), it combines the 1999-2010 CHES trendfile (Bakker et al., 2015) with the Expert Surveys collected by Ray (1999) which covers the years 1984-1996.

Hooghe et al. (2010) have documented the reliability and validity of the CHES data. The Manifesto Project dataset, on the other hand, has been subjected to extensive methodological debates. Gemenis (2013) provides an overview of these debates and singles out four issues: (1) the theoretical underpinnings of the coding scheme, (2) the selection of documents, (3) the reliability of the codings and (4) scaling procedures. The latter is the most hotly debated aspect of the dataset and involves discussions of how to correctly infer parties’ policy positions from the data. Indeed, several authors have proposed sophisticated scaling techniques as alternatives to the standard left-right scale provided in the data (Gabel and Huber, 2000; Franzmann and Kaiser, 2006; Lowe et al., 2011).

For the purpose of this study, however, I circumvent these debates since I am not interested in parties’ policy positions, but rather in their attention to individual issues. As such, I use the data set as it was originally intended, to measure parties emphasis of policy issues (Budge et al., 2001). The Manifesto Project data set is well equipped for such a task as it relies on trained coders who manually code ‘quasi-sentences’ of party manifestos, assigning them into one of the 56 issue categories specified by the code book. The resulting data set measures parties’ relative emphasis on each issue. Furthermore, the Manifesto Project provides currently the only data set capable of constructing rich time series of parties’ issue attention across a large number of parties in different countries.

### 2.4.2 Case Selection

The empirical chapters examine the issue attention strategies of political parties in western European party systems from 1950 to 2013. I exclude eastern European countries because these systems have exhibited a high degree of party system instability and because patterns of political competition in these systems are distinct from western European structures of competition, which renders comparisons not feasible within the scope of this study (see for example Rovny, 2014; Marks et al., 2006). The following countries are included: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Great-Britain, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the



Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland. The inclusion criteria for parties follows the Manifesto Project data set. Parties that have contested less than two elections are dropped from the sample in order to create time series. The dataset comprises information on 259 political parties. Table A.1 in appendix A presents a list of parties included in the empirical part of this study.

In chapter 5 the time period under investigation is from 1980 onwards. Electoral support for issue entrepreneurial parties is a key predictor in the models in chapter 5, and many of these parties first emerged and became successful in the 1980s. The models are based on information of 146 parties. Chapter 5 also presents a model based on data from the Chapel Hill Expert Surveys. The data set for this model comprises information on 138 parties in 14 countries. Luxembourg is not included in the CHES data and non EU-member states are dropped since this model serves to explain party attention to European Union issues.

## 2.5 Summary

In this chapter I have argued that there are two theoretical approaches to the study of how issues become salient in political systems. The bottom up approach emphasizes societal inputs to the political agenda whereas the top down perspective argues that the strategic actions of political elites to a large extent determine which issues are the focus of political contest. Salience theory has gained a dominant position within the top down research tradition, but suffers from a one-sided focus on parties' incentives to selectively emphasize the issues that are beneficial to them. Salience theory has little to say about (1) overlap in parties' issue attention, (2) the scope of parties' issue agendas and (3) innovation in issue agendas. These three components will be the focus of the subsequent empirical chapters. Building on classical theories of issue evolution and party behavior, I examine the extent to which (1) external party system pressures and (2) internal party organizational structures have an impact on these three components of parties' issue attention strategies.

---

Setting the Agenda or Responding to the Agenda?  
Explaining the Degree of Responsiveness to Competitors  
in Parties' Issue Agendas

---

---

*\*Earlier versions of this chapter were presented at the the Work in Progress seminar of the research unit 'Democracy and Democratization' of the WZB Berlin Social Science Center (2015, Berlin); at the Work in Progress Workshop of the Berlin Graduate School of Social Sciences at the Humboldt University Berlin (2015, Berlin) and at the annual conference of the Elections, Public Opinion and Parties (EPOP) specialist group of the Political Studies Association (2015, Cardiff). I thank Christoffer Green-Pedersen, Onawa Promise Lacewell, Arndt Leininger, Nicolas Merz, Dag Tanneberg, Pola Lehmann, Claudia Ritzi, Rob Gruijters, Ilyas Saliba, Tim Winke, Sybille Luhmann & Mathias Poertner for their valuable comments.*

“ Surely, neither side chose to emphasize themes that gave an advantage to the other. The results of this method of choosing issues was that rhetors in two groups did not, by and large, discuss the same things. But of course they were conscious of each others’ claims and, in many ways, phrased their arguments to undercut the opponents’ positions. So while we have two campaigns with different themes, we also have responses and deprecations. In some degree [...] these interactions affected both the course of debate and, possibly, the outcomes. ”

---

William H. Riker, *Rhetorical Interaction in the Ratification Campaigns*, 1993 (p.84)

Studying the political debates surrounding the ratification of the constitution of the United States in 1787-1788 to test his theory of agenda formation, William Riker acknowledges that although both the federalists and the antifederalists focused on different things, the debates were also characterized by interactions with both sides responding to one another and discussing common themes.

### 3.1 Introduction

CONTRASTING DOWNSIAN SPATIAL LOGIC, which assumes parties to compete by means of *direct confrontation* on a set of exogenously determined policy issues (Downs, 1957), issue salience theories posit that parties engage in political competition through their *selective emphasis* of different issues. The issues that are being discussed in politics are, as such, endogenous to political competition, and are determined by the strategic actions of political parties (cf. Colomer and Puglisi, 2005). Parties are expected to focus on issues on which they enjoy relative advantages over their competitors (Budge and Farlie, 1983; Robertson, 1976), for example because they have come to ‘own’ the issue (Petrocik, 1996). By the same logic, parties avoid issues that might benefit their rivals. Taken this line of reasoning to its logical end, the implication is that political opponents, quite literally, “do not talk about the same things” (Riker, 1993b, p.82).

Despite this prediction, an expanding body of literature has exposed instances of *issue overlap* (Damore, 2005), *issue convergence* (Sigelman and Buell, 2004), *issue engagement* (Meyer and Wagner, 2015) or *issue trespassing* (van de Wardt, 2015), describing situations in which parties talk about issues brought forward by competitors.

This chapter explores the extent to which parties are responsive to the issue appeals of their competitors on two general issue-domains: the economic- and the cultural issue domain. Do parties take into account the actions of their competitors when they decide whether to increase or decrease the emphasis they place on issues pertaining to either one of those larger issue domains? This constitutes an important question since the concept of party competition, from a theoretical perspective, implies the existence of ‘competitive interactions’ between parties (Bartolini, 1999).<sup>1</sup> Selective emphasis theories, however, only posit expectations with regard to the issue appeals of individual parties; they are expected to emphasize their own preferred issues. This chapter, by contrast, examines the degree of responsiveness to competitors in issue salience strategies, and variation therein. As such, it represents an attempt to focus on *interaction* in issue competition (cf. Green-Pedersen and Mortensen, 2014).

Other studies have established that issue convergence in election campaigns occurs quite often. This chapter goes one step further and focusses on variation in the extent to which parties are responsive to the issue appeals of their competitors. It makes three arguments. First, parties are, generally speaking, responsive to the issue appeals of their competitors. Second, parties differ in their degree of responsiveness to competitors based on their competitive position in the party system and, thirdly, intra party politics affects parties’ inclination to respond to their rivals.

The first argument holds that parties adjust the salience of issues in their election manifestos in response to changes in the *systemic salience* of issue domains. Systemic salience, the degree of attention that other parties in the system pay to an issue domain, serves as an indicator for parties of the relative importance of issues, and provides them with information on the structure and the content of the political space in which they compete.

However, not all parties are equally responsive. Mainstream parties regularly switch between government and opposition and have experience with other parties in coalition governments (see de Vries and Hobolt, 2012). Therefore, they should be more ‘sensitive’ to the agendas of their competitors. Moreover, mainstream parties seek to maintain the status quo of the political system, which resulted in their advantageous position. They do not want to upset (future) coalition partners by proposing agendas that are radically different from the party system agenda. Challenger parties have no prior experience with coalition government and are more likely to push forward their own issue agendas. As they occupy losing positions in the system, they have an incentive to change the status quo and, hence, they do not need to be responsive to competitors’ agendas.

---

<sup>1</sup>For a more extensive discussion of competition in the political ‘issue market’, and the distinction between competition as a macro level phenomenon and *contest* and *cooperation* as forms of interaction between actors at the micro level, see Franzmann (2011).

The third argument relates to the intra party balance of power between leaders and activists. Party leaders, this chapter argues, perceive the need to be responsive to other parties more strongly as it serves their office-seeking motivations. Party activists are driven by policy motives; Panebianco (1988) refers to them as ‘policy-believers’. They would like to see the party maintain its focus on its traditional agenda, and they are less convinced of the need for the party to respond to its competitive context. Hence, if leaders are dominant, parties should be more responsive to changes in the systemic salience of issue domains. Pooled time series analyses of the systemic salience of economic and cultural issue domains and the issue profiles of 259 parties in 18 European countries between 1950 and 2013 provide tentative support for these theoretical propositions.

This chapter proceeds by discussing the literature on issue-competition and party organization, and by deriving hypotheses on parties’ degree of issue responsiveness to competitors. Data, operationalization and the estimation techniques are put forward in the second part after which the empirical results are presented. The chapter closes with discussing its findings and proposing some possibilities for future research.

## 3.2 Issue Responsiveness to Rival Parties

Why should political parties be responsive to the issue strategies of their competitors? The spatial modeling literature, originating from the classical models as put forward by Hotelling (1929) and Downs (1957), revolves around the prediction that parties’ policy positions converge on the median voter position.<sup>2</sup> In terms of parties’ strategic behavior, this prediction has two implications. First, parties should be responsive to shifts in public opinion, an expectation which has received empirical support (Stimson, MacKuen and Erikson, 1995; Adams et al., 2004, 2006; Ezrow et al., 2011). Second, parties are expected to respond to the policy positions as taken by their rivals, leading to a type of Nash equilibrium in the party system: a party chooses its optimal position *given* the policy positions of the other parties. Empirical evidence offers support for this notion in as far that parties seem to shift their policy positions, from one election to another, in the same direction as their opponents do (Adams and Somer-Topcu, 2009).

Following critiques of the axiom of ordered dimensions that underpins spatial models (Stokes, 1963), issue competition theories have put forward that party competition is not so much a matter of diverging or converging policy positions, but, rather, that parties differentiate themselves from one another by putting forward some issues more strongly than others. Parties, in this view, compete for the attention of the public for their preferred issues. The logic of ‘selective emphasis’ (Budge and Farlie, 1983; Robertson, 1976), then, implies that parties do not talk about their rivals’ policies (see also Dolezal et al., 2014).

<sup>2</sup>Grofman (2004), however, discusses the assumptions on which the convergence result in Downsian models rests, and how violations of these assumptions make the result disappear.

Even proponents of the issue competition perspective acknowledge, however, that parties at times respond to the issue strategies of their competitors. Budge and Farlie (1983, p.29) state that sometimes issues are impossible for politicians to ignore, even if addressing them would not be beneficial, simply because “the state of the world” imposes constraints. And Petrocik (1996, p.829) argues that when an issue of the opponent becomes unavoidable, strategic politicians use an “advantageous interpretation of the problem” to highlight their competence. Still, issue competition theories predict issue convergence – that is, political opponents talking about the same issues in election campaigns –, to occur only incidentally. Indeed, as Sigelman and Buell (2004, p.652) state, it “should be the exception rather than the rule.”

However, empirical studies of the issue appeals of political elites tell a rather different story. Studies of issue convergence in the United States find evidence that it occurs relatively frequently (Sigelman and Buell, 2004; Damore, 2004, 2005; Petrocik, Benoit and Hansen, 2003). And in one of the few studies going beyond the United States context, Green-Pedersen (2007b) reports that the different European party families tend to address similar issues in their election manifestos. Furthermore, following the framework proposed by Meguid (2005), several recent studies describe how mainstream parties in Europe are responsive to the issue appeals as put forward by ‘issue entrepreneurs’ (Spoon, Hobolt and de Vries, 2014; Abou-Chadi, 2014; Schumacher and van Kersbergen, 2014; van de Wardt, 2015) (see also chapter 5). Apparently, parties feel the urge to respond to their rivals’ policy agendas, as such creating a ‘party system agenda’ consisting of issues relevant to all parties in the system (Green-Pedersen and Mortensen, 2010).

In sum, parties face incentives to selectively emphasize ‘their’ issues, but at the same time they exhibit responsiveness to the issue appeals of their competitors. Relative differences in the degree of *issue responsiveness* to other parties depends, this chapter argues, on two things. First, parties’ competitive position in the party system matters. This is captured by the distinction between mainstream and challenger parties. Mainstream parties should respond more strongly to other parties’ agendas than do challenger parties. Second, intra-party politics plays a role. Party activists are more concerned with a party’s ‘own’ issues while party leaders are more ‘sensitive’ towards the competitive environment in which the party operates. These arguments are further developed in the following section.

### 3.2.1 Challenger versus Mainstream & Activists versus Leaders

Political parties compete in an inherently uncertain environment, as there is no reliable information about the effects of their issue strategies on electoral support (Budge, 1994).<sup>3</sup> One piece of information that parties have at their disposal consists of the electoral successes, or failures, associated with previous issue strategies. Empirical evidence suggests, in this respect, that parties change their issue profiles in response to past election results, especially when they have lost votes and when not much time has elapsed since the last election (Somer-Topcu, 2009).

An alternative source of information for parties when deciding on their issue strategies is composed of the actions of their competitors. The *systemic salience* of an issue domain, that is the extent to which other parties in the system emphasize a specific group of issues, should inform the strategies of individual parties. It gives them a sense of the relative importance of issue domains and, as such, of the structure and content of the issue space in which they compete. Steenbergen and Scott (2004, p.179) argue that the emphasis a party places on a specific issue is to some extent a function of the salience of this issue to other parties. Parties are constrained in determining the emphasis they want to place on an issue by the salience other parties attach to it. A similar logic is explicated by the concept of the party system agenda, which consists of a set of issues that, in any given election, is so important to the party system as a whole that individual parties cannot simply ignore it (Green-Pedersen and Mortensen, 2010). Based on these considerations, it seems reasonable to expect that the systemic salience of groups of issues affects the salience that individual parties allocate to these issues in their programs. This leads to the first hypothesis:

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Parties increase the salience of an issue domain in their manifesto if the systemic salience of that issue domain increases

However, it is unlikely that all parties are equally responsive. I argue that differences in the degree of issue responsiveness to competitors depend on a party's relative position in the competitive party system, captured by the distinction between mainstream and challenger parties. The mainstream-challenger framework has been introduced by de Vries and Hobolt (2012). In this view, party competition in multi-party settings occurs between mainstream parties that regularly participate in coalition governments (but are sometimes also excluded from office) and challenger parties that have never held office (see also Hobolt and Karp, 2010). As such, in any given election, three types of parties compete: *challenger parties*, *mainstream opposition parties* and *mainstream government parties*. There are two reasons why these different types of parties differ with regard to their issue responsiveness to rivals.

---

<sup>3</sup>Public opinion polls do provide parties with information. The 'problem' with polls is, as Budge (1994) argues, that they do not provide information on what drives voting behavior. Thus, polls "may in general terms identify certain issues as important to electors, but leave it open as to whether these will necessarily affect their vote" (Budge, 1994, p.455).

First, opposition parties are usually perceived to be more ‘flexible’ in their issue strategies as compared to government parties. They have no record in office to which they are tied. Voters judge incumbent parties by their performance in government; for example, it has been shown that voters tend to discount their manifesto pledges since they take into account that government parties have to accept policy compromises (Bawn and Somer-Topcu, 2012; Cho and Endersby, 2003). Incumbents are thus constraint in their issue strategies. In their study of issue competition in Denmark, Green-Pedersen and Mortensen (2010, p.273) find that opposition parties focus more on issues that are advantageous to them whereas parties in government “are compelled to respond to issues brought up on the party system agenda.” Seeberg (2013) likewise emphasizes the opportunities that opposition parties have to politicize issues while government parties only passively respond to the issues that are being brought up in the system. I formalize these considerations in the following hypothesis:

**H<sub>2</sub>:** Mainstream government parties are more responsive to the issue agendas of their competitors than are mainstream opposition parties

Second, challenger parties should, because of their lack of experience in government and their incentive to propose new agendas, be less concerned with the issue strategies of their rivals than mainstream parties. Challengers have no governmental experience with other parties which makes them less ‘sensitive’ to their competitive environment. Mainstream parties, on the other hand, regularly deal with other parties in coalition governments, and therefore it seems reasonable to expect that they respond more strongly to the issue appeals of their competitors.

Moreover, mainstream parties are the political winners in the current system whereas challengers occupy disadvantageous positions (de Vries and Hobolt, 2012). Following ‘issue evolution’ theories (Carmines and Stimson, 1986), challengers have an incentive to change the system by proposing agendas that deviate from the political status quo (see also Riker, 1982, 1986, 1993*b*). Studies show, in this regard, how political losers seek to politicize issues that are being neglected by the political mainstream, such as European integration (de Vries and Hobolt, 2012; Hobolt and de Vries, 2015). Challengers lack experience in government and have very limited opportunities to join future governments. As a result, they are likely to adopt more risky policy platforms than do mainstream parties. Indeed, their ability to offer a clear alternative to the political mainstream underpins, to a large extent, their appeal among voters (Hobolt and Tilley, 2016). Such issue strategies also entail that challengers are less responsive to the agendas of their competitors.

Mainstream parties, the winners in the system, do not have an incentive to propose new agendas. They seek to reinforce existing patterns of political competition. Mainstream parties’ agendas are influenced by their prior participation in coalition government as well as by their desire to join future governments. A party of this kind is “cautious in mobilising around new issues or adopting positions far from other parties, since both would make it more difficult to enter into coalition



government” (Hobolt and Tilley, 2016, p.974). Tavits (2008) demonstrates, in this respect, how parties use cues based on the past behaviour of their competitors when engaged in coalition negotiations. Mainstream parties choose policy agendas that approximate those of likely coalition partners. They are, hence, more concerned with the platforms of their competitors than are challengers. These arguments lead to the following hypothesis:

**H<sub>3</sub>:** Challenger parties show less issue responsiveness to competitors than do mainstream parties

Party behavior is, however, not only determined externally by party system dynamics; *internal* party politics also plays a role. There is an extant literature that links party strategy to intra party politics (Kitschelt, 1989, 1994; Pedersen, 2010, 2012; Ceron, 2012; Ware, 1992; Schumacher, de Vries and Vis, 2013; Wagner and Meyer, 2014). These studies build on the premise that there are two crucial groups of actors within parties that have diverging strategic goals. Party leaders mainly seek to satisfy their office-seeking motivations, even if this means they have to be more ‘pragmatic’ in electoral competition. After all, they enjoy the spoils associated with being in office. Party activists are usually portrayed as being more ‘policy rigid’; they are mainly motivated by policy seeking objectives (i.e. pulling public policy in their preferred direction) (Panebianco, 1988; Strøm, 1990; Müller and Strøm, 1999; Schlesinger, 1975; Aldrich, 2011).

Building on these propositions, I argue that party leaders should perceive the need for their party to respond to its competitive environment more strongly than activists. The motivation for a party to connect its issue profile to that of competitor parties is likely driven by vote- and ultimately office-seeking incentives. The party system agenda provides parties with information on the relative importance of issues. By connecting its issue profile to that of their rivals, a party can make sure it “rides the wave” (Ansolabehere and Iyengar, 1994) of the issues that are being discussed in the party system – that is, addressing the issues that are currently the focus of political contest in the party system. Parties may want to do this as to signal to voters that they address the major political issues of the day. Wagner and Meyer (2014, p.10122) argue, in this respect, that “parties can improve their image if they address those issues that currently dominate the public debate.” In a similar way, Ansolabehere and Iyengar (1994, p.337) posit that political candidates are more likely to be perceived as concerned, responsive, and informed if they “campaign on the major issues of the day.” Issue responsiveness to competitors is thus driven by a party’s vote- and office-seeking incentives. Therefore, party leaders should be especially tempted to pursue such a strategy, and are likely to prioritise it over a focus on the party’s ‘own’ issues.

Party activists, on the other hand, are less convinced of the party’s need to exhibit a certain degree of ‘sensitivity’ to competitors. Activists would like to see their investment in the party be rewarded with changing public policy. Hence, they would like to see the party keep its focus on its own program and issues. These issues are, in many cases, the main reason why they joined the party and

why they invest time and effort in the party. Activists want the party to remain its focus on the issues that are of central concern to them. As a result, “parties dominated by activists will find it harder to orient the party towards currently salient policy concerns” (Wagner and Meyer, 2014, p.1023). Therefore, I posit the following hypothesis:

**H<sub>4</sub>:** Parties in which the leadership is powerful exhibit more issue responsiveness to competitors than parties in which activists are powerful

### 3.2.2 The Cultural and the Economic Issue Domain

This chapter examines parties’ responsiveness to competitors on two general issue-domains: the economic and the cultural issue domain. Although economic issues tend to dominate politics in advanced democracies (Benoit and Laver, 2006), issues not pertaining to this dimension have over time become increasingly apparent in policy agendas (Green-Pedersen, 2007b). Recent studies have investigated when non-economic issues become more salient for citizens’ vote choices (De La O and Rodden, 2008; Lefkofridi, Wagner and Willmann, 2014) and under which circumstances parties are more likely to publicize these issues (Tavits and Potter, 2015; Ward et al., 2015).

Here, I assume that parties compete on both issue domains. As such, this chapter builds on an expanding body of literature that acknowledges the presence of both an economic and a cultural issue domain in political conflict (Kitschelt, 1994; Kriesi et al., 2006; Marks et al., 2006; Flanagan and Lee, 2003; Laver and Hunt, 1992; Tavits, 2007; Spies and Franzmann, 2011; Rohrschneider and Whitefield, 2012).<sup>4</sup> The first issue domain is generally associated with distributional conflicts and issues that are interpreted in material terms, and centers on the question of the adequate degree of government intervention in the economy, whereas the latter domain refers to social, moral and cultural issues usually interpreted in terms of values (cf. Tavits, 2007). The operationalization of these two issue domains is explained in more detail in the following section.

## 3.3 Data & Operationalization

I employ data from the Manifesto Project (MRG-CMP-MARPOR) (Volkens et al., 2014; Klingemann et al., 2006; Budge et al., 2001) to infer parties’ issue emphases on both the economic and the cultural issue domain as well as to assess the systemic salience of these domains. The MRG-CMP-MARPOR dataset allows for such measurement since its coding scheme offers 56 issue categories in which quasi sentences in party manifestos are categorized by hand. To date, the MRG-CMP-MARPOR project provides the only data set available that is suitable for

<sup>4</sup>But compare Mair (2007) and van der Brug and van Spanje (2009) for studies maintaining the assumption of one-dimensionality in political issue spaces in Europe.

measuring parties' issue salience strategies over a long period of time across a large number of parties.

The hypotheses on issue responsiveness, as derived above, require the construction of both an economic and a cultural issue domain. One way of extracting the dimensionality of the political space from the MRCG-CMP-MARPOR data is by using data reduction techniques such as principal component analysis. Gabel and Huber (2000) argue in favor of such an approach when estimating general left-right positions of parties. When examining specific issue domains, however, such an approach can be problematic (Laver and Hunt, 1992).<sup>5</sup> Benoit and Laver (2012) argue that *ex post* inductive approaches to estimating policy dimensions come with serious methodological challenges, and they recommend researchers to "leverage [their] *de facto* knowledge of [policy] dimensions as part of the estimation process" (Benoit and Laver, 2012, p.216). Therefore, and following common practice in the literature (see for example Meguid, 2005; Meyer and Wagner, 2013), the two issue domains are constructed *a-priori* and on the basis of substantive considerations.

For the economic issue domain, I select issue categories from the MRG-CMP-MARPOR data that relate to distributional conflicts, state intervention in the economy and social protection. To construct the cultural domain, moral and cultural issues, as well as immigration and environmental issues, were selected. The specific variables that are included in the domains are listed in table 3.1.

The identification of the issue categories follows previous research. The MRG-CMP-MARPOR variables chosen for the economic issue domain largely overlap with Stoll's (2010) "socio-economic" dimension, Spies and Franzmann's (2011) "economic dimension", Meyer and Wagner's (2013) "economic subject area", Wagner's (2012) "economic policy topic" and the items Green-Pedersen (2007b) defines as "economic and distributional issues". Moreover, it includes all the issues Tavits (2007) selected for her "economic domain" and most issues used by Lowe et al. (2011) to construct their policy scales describing "free market economy", "state involvement in the economy" and "planned vs market economy."

While the economic issue domain tends to be relatively uniform, studies show that the content of the cultural issue domain varies significantly over time and across countries (Benoit and Laver, 2006; Marks et al., 2006). The cultural issue domain might consist of issues that form a coherent 'second dimension' of politics mapping onto an ideological continuum ranging from 'libertarian' to 'authoritarian' policy beliefs (cf. Kitschelt, 1994; Flanagan and Lee, 2003). At times, however, it also includes a broader set of non-economic issues that do not necessarily relate to each other in terms of a coherent policy dimension (Ward et al., 2015). Therefore, the issue domain as defined in this study includes a rather broad set of issues: moral and cultural issues as well as issues related to immigration and the environment. Issues relating to European integration are left out since these do not seem to 'fit' one of the issue domains (Green-Pedersen, 2012; Hooghe, Marks and

<sup>5</sup>For a similar argument, see Tavits (2007, p.156).

TABLE 3.1 – Variables Included in the Economic and Cultural Issue Domains

<i>Economic Issue Domain</i>	
<b>Variable</b>	<b>Description</b>
Per401	Free Enterprise: Positive
Per402	Incentives: Positive
Per403	Market Regulation: Positive
Per404	Economic Planning: Positive
Per406	Protectionism: Positive
Per407	Protectionism: Negative
Per408	Economic Goals
Per409	Keynesian Demand Management: Positive
Per410	Productivity: Positive
Per411	Technology and Infrastructure: Positive
Per412	Controlled Economy: Positive
Per413	Nationalisation: Positive
Per414	Economic Orthodoxy: Positive
Per415	Marxist Analysis: Positive
Per504	Welfare State Expansion: Positive
Per505	Welfare State Limitation: Positive
Per701	Labour Groups: Positive
Per702	Labour Groups: Negative
<i>Cultural Issue Domain</i>	
<b>Variable</b>	<b>Description</b>
Per103	Anti-Imperialism: Positive
Per104	Military: Positive
Per105	Military: Negative
Per106	Peace: Positive
Per107	Internationalism: Positive
Per109	Internationalism: Negative
Per201	Freedom and Human Rights: Positive
Per202	Democracy: Positive
Per305	Political Authority: Positive
Per416	Anti-Growth Economy: Positive
Per501	Environmental Protection: Positive
Per601	National Way of Life: Positive
Per602	National Way of Life: Negative
Per603	Traditional Morality: Positive
Per604	Traditional Morality: Negative
Per605	Law and Order: Positive
Per606	Social Harmony: Positive
Per607	Multiculturalism: Positive
Per608	Multiculturalism: Negative
Per705	Underprivileged Minority Groups: Positive

*Note:* Variables are taken from the MRG-CMP-MARPOR data (Volkens et al., 2014). For a more extensive description of the variables, see the manifesto project coding scheme at [https://manifestoproject.wzb.eu/coding\\_schemes/1](https://manifestoproject.wzb.eu/coding_schemes/1).

Wilson, 2002); perhaps because (potential) political conflicts originating from the process of European integration can be approached in both cultural and economic frames (Kitschelt, 2007, p.543).

The cultural issue domain constructed in this study overlaps with the “non-economic issue dimensions” defined by Spies and Franzmann (2011) and Rovny (2012) and uses similar categories as the “social domain” and the “social liberal-conservative policy scale” as put forward by Tavits (2007) and Lowe et al. (2011), respectively. The categories that relate to environmental and immigration issues are chosen following recent studies (Spoon, Hobolt and de Vries, 2014; Abou-Chadi, 2014; Alonso and Fonseca, 2011).

Figure 3.1 displays the distribution of the salience of the issue domains by time period and by party type using box plots. Figure 3.1(a) shows the salience of the economic and cultural issue domain for all parties. It shows how the politicization of cultural issues lagged behind economic issues until the 1980s. The cultural issue domain became especially important to parties in the 1990s, even surpassing economic issues in importance. In recent years, economic issues have become more apparent again. This general pattern of issue importance over time is in accordance with most descriptions of the rise of ‘second dimension politics’ (Kitschelt, 1994; Flanagan and Lee, 2003; Green-Pedersen, 2007b).

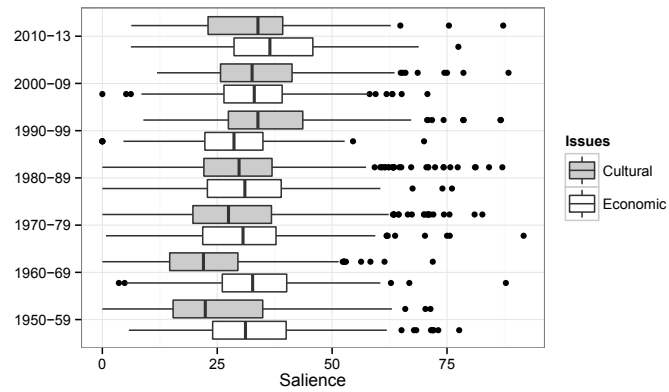
Figure 3.1(b) and 3.1(c) present the salience of the economic and cultural issue domain, respectively, broken down by party type. For mainstream parties, economic issues tend to be more important; while challengers focus more on the cultural issue domain.

The dependent variables in this study are the issue emphases of individual parties of the economic and the cultural issue domain. Salience is measured by summing up the degree of attention in party manifestos to the individual issue categories.

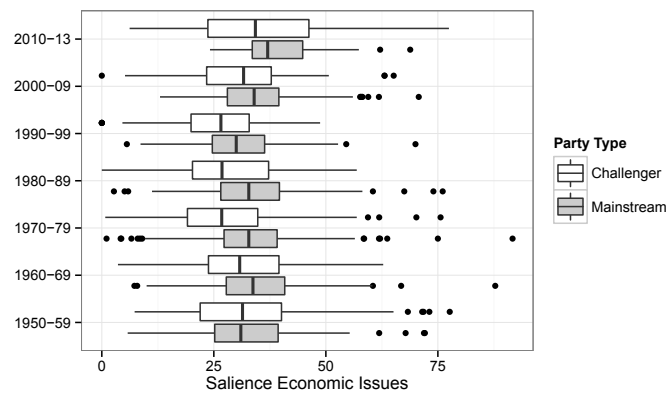
Turning to the predictors, I follow Steenbergen and Scott (2004) and Green-Pedersen and Mortensen (2014) in their operationalization of *systemic salience* as the mean salience all parties in a given country in a given election put on an issue domain, excluding the party under analysis. Hence, in a three-party system for example, the systemic salience of an issue domain for party A is defined as the mean salience level of parties B and C. Like Steenbergen and Scott (2004) and Green-Pedersen and Mortensen (2014), I refrain from using a vote-weighted measure of systemic salience since this would assume that parties influence the systemic salience of issues proportional to their vote share, a strong assumption in European multi party system where smaller parties often enjoy significant agenda-setting power. However, I re-estimate all models using a vote-weighted measure of systemic salience. In this case, the salience parties put on an issue domain is weighted by their vote share at election  $t - 1$ . The substantive results are robust to this alternative operationalization of the systemic salience variable. Tables B.2, B.3 & B.4 in appendix B present the results of these analyses.

I distinguish between *challenger* and *mainstream* parties based on past experience in government (de Vries and Hobolt, 2012; Hobolt and de Vries, 2015). A

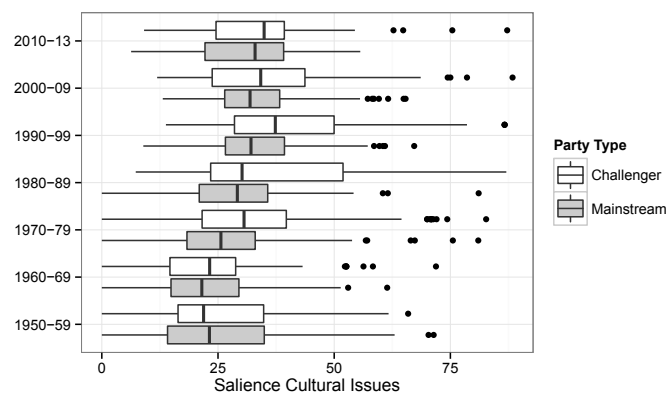
FIGURE 3.1 – Salience of the Economic and Cultural Issue Domains in Party Manifestos, 1950-2013



(a)



(b)



(c)

*Note:* Figure (a) shows the salience of the economic and cultural issue domain for all parties. Figure (b) displays the salience of the economic issue domain for mainstream and challenger parties. Figure (c) displays the salience of the cultural issue domain for mainstream and challenger parties

challenger party is a party that has not previously held political office and turns into a mainstream party once it enters a government coalition (see also van de Wardt, de Vries and Hobolt, 2014; van de Wardt, 2015). Further, I distinguish between *mainstream opposition* and *mainstream government* parties: the first type has governed in the past (and is, hence, a mainstream party) but was condemned to opposition status in the period preceding the election at hand whereas the latter type enters the election as an incumbent party.

The third independent variable, finally, concerns the intra party balance of power. In line with other recent studies (Schumacher, de Vries and Vis, 2013; Wagner and Meyer, 2014; Pedersen, 2012), I use two questions from the Laver and Hunt (1992) expert survey<sup>6</sup> that tap the power of party activists and party leaders over party policy.<sup>7</sup> The answers to both questions are scored on a scale ranging from 0 (no influence at all) to 20 (a very great influence).<sup>8</sup> I subtract the score indicating the power of the activists from the score indicating the power of the party leadership. This results in a intra party balance of power scale measuring to what extent the leadership is unconstrained in deciding on the party's policy course. I rescale the index to run from 0 to 30, with higher scores indicating more power for the leadership. The measure is time-invariant, so the assumption is that parties do not change their organizational features dramatically over time. Harmel and Janda (1994) have argued, in this respect, that parties are generally conservative organizations that are hesitant to change their internal rules and structures. Moreover, intra-party rules for candidate selection, an important feature of party organization, exhibit remarkable stability over time (Bille, 2001).<sup>9</sup>

Turning now to the control variables, all models include a variable measuring vote change since past election results, especially vote losses at previous election cycles, often induce parties to change their issue profiles (Somer-Topcu, 2009; Budge, 1994; Budge, Ezrow and McDonald, 2010). The variable is operationalized as the difference between vote shares in successive elections and is lagged, thus indicating vote differences between election  $t - 2$  and  $t - 1$ .<sup>10</sup> Information about vote shares is taken from the Manifesto Project data. I also add party size (a party's vote share at the previous election) as a control variable.

Further, I control for ideological extremity, since parties that take relatively extreme issue positions are likely to be less responsive to other parties. Studies show how parties that are relative outliers on issue dimensions tend to emphasize these issues as to publicize their extreme position more strongly (Rovny, 2012; Wagner, 2012). Hence, they should be less concerned with changes in the systemic salience of issues. I use Franzmann and Kaiser's (2006) transformation of

<sup>6</sup>Harmel and Janda's (1996) party change project is an alternative frequently used data source that includes information on intra party politics. However, data is available for only four countries.

<sup>7</sup>The exact wording of the questions is: "assess the influence that party leaders have over the formation of party policy" and "assess the influence that party activists have over the formation of party policy".

<sup>8</sup>The correlation between the two scales is  $-.72$

<sup>9</sup>For a similar argument see Schumacher, de Vries and Vis (2013, p.470).

<sup>10</sup>Parties draft their election manifestos before election ( $t$ ), their information on vote changes in previous elections concerns the differences in vote shares between election  $t - 2$  and  $t - 1$ .

TABLE 3.2 – Operationalization of the Variables

Dependent variables	Indicator	Data source
Issue emphasis cultural issue domain	Sum of attention to cultural issue categories (see table 3.1)	Own calculation Volkens et al. (2014)
Issue emphasis economic issue domain	Sum of attention to economic issue categories (see table 3.1)	Own calculation Volkens et al. (2014)
Independent variables	Indicator	Data source
Systemic salience cultural issues	All other parties' emphases on cultural issues, excluding party under analysis	Own calculation Volkens et al. (2014)
Systemic salience economic issues	All other parties' emphases on economic issues, excluding party under analysis	Own calculation Volkens et al. (2014)
Challenger party	Never in government before election <sub>t</sub> , otherwise 0	Data on government participation taken from Volkens et al. (2014)
Mainstream party	Has been in government before election <sub>t</sub> , otherwise 0	Data on government participation taken from Volkens et al. (2014)
Mainstream government party	Has been in government before election <sub>t</sub> , and in government in period preceding election <sub>t</sub> , otherwise 0	Data on government participation taken from Volkens et al. (2014)
Mainstream opposition party	Has been in government before election <sub>t</sub> , and not in government in period preceding election <sub>t</sub> , otherwise 0	Data on government participation taken from Volkens et al. (2014)
Intra party balance of power	Two expert survey questions: (q1) influence party activists over party policy (q2) influence party leaders over party policy $q2 - q1 + \text{lowest value}$	Laver and Hunt (1992)
Control variables	Indicator	Data source
Party size	Vote share election <sub>t-1</sub>	Volkens et al. (2014)
Vote difference	Vote share election <sub>t-1</sub> – Vote share election <sub>t-2</sub>	Volkens et al. (2014)
Ideological extremity	Extremity party position on left-right dimension $ \text{party position} - \text{midpoint of scale} $	Franzmann and Kaiser (2006)
GDP	GDP growth rate one year before election <sub>t</sub>	the World Bank (2015)

the MRG-CMP-MARPOR data to infer parties' ideological positions. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to engage with the extensive debates on how to use the Manifesto Project data to correctly infer party policy positions (see for example Budge and Meyer, 2013; Lowe et al., 2011). It suffices to say that the Franzmann-Kaiser method attempts to incorporate such arguments that the meaning of policy positions, for example in terms of left and right, differs across time and space (Benoit and Laver, 2006); and offers time- and country-specific estimates. The Franzmann-Kaiser data set includes parties' ideological positions on an economic and on a socio-cultural dimension, with scores running from 0 to 10. Ideological extremity is then estimated as the absolute difference between a party's position and the midpoint of the scale. The new measure thus runs from 0 to 5, with higher scores indicating more extreme positions. For the models predicting the salience of the economic issue domain, I use the ideological scores on the economic dimension while the models examining the cultural issue domain include, accordingly, positional scores on the socio-cultural dimension.

All models also control for GDP growth, serving as a proxy for the degree of post-materialism in a society. The higher the degree of post-materialism, the more parties should focus on non-economic concerns. Drawing on data from the



TABLE 3.3 – Descriptive Statistics

<i>All Parties</i>	<b>n</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Sd</b>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>
$\Delta$ Salience cultural issues	1,636	−0.053	11.840	−73.289	57.120
$\Delta$ Salience economic issues	1,636	0.723	12.278	−75.000	54.440
$\Delta$ Systemic salience cultural issues	1,636	0.342	6.971	−26.550	28.998
$\Delta$ Systemic salience economic issues	1,636	0.441	6.666	−20.683	27.350
Party size <sub>t−1</sub>	1,636	15.808	13.528	0.000	54.373
Ideological extremity (cultural)	1,417	1.690	1.145	0.004	5.000
Ideological extremity (economic)	1,514	2.044	1.257	0.001	5.000
Vote difference	1,433	−0.059	4.030	−18.595	22.731
Intra party balance of power	1,408	18.306	5.357	0.000	29.630
GDP	1,547	2.815	2.625	−5.185	13.561
<b><i>Dichotomous variable</i></b>		<b>%</b>			
Challenger party (cp/mainstream)	1,895	43.06%			
<i>Mainstream Parties</i>	<b>n</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Sd</b>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>
$\Delta$ Salience cultural issues	1,040	0.348	11.985	−73.289	55.700
$\Delta$ Salience economic issues	1,040	0.375	12.816	−75.000	54.440
$\Delta$ Systemic salience cultural issues	1,040	0.478	7.214	−26.550	28.419
$\Delta$ Systemic salience economic issues	1,040	0.479	6.703	−20.300	27.350
Party size <sub>t−1</sub>	1,040	20.533	13.921	0.712	54.373
Ideological extremity (cultural)	852	1.439	1.034	0.004	5.000
Ideological extremity (economic)	914	1.831	1.155	0.006	5.000
Vote difference	985	−0.213	4.406	−18.595	22.731
Intra party balance of power	926	18.593	4.502	4.080	27.430
GDP	1,547	2.815	2.625	−5.185	13.561
<b><i>Dichotomous variable</i></b>		<b>%</b>			
Mainstream opposition party (opp/gov)	1,079	42.08%			

World Bank (2015), I use the the percentage of change in GDP growth rate one year before the election.

The data set includes information on 259 political parties in 18 European democracies between 1950 and 2013.<sup>11</sup> Table 3.3 presents descriptive statistics; an overview of the operationalization of the variables is shown in table 3.2.

### 3.4 Model Specification

I estimate a series of models in *first differences*, which allow for analyzing the direct association between shifts in issue emphases of individual parties and changes in the systemic salience of issue domains. This model specification is similar as in Steenbergen and Scott (2004), who assess the association between the salience individual parties attach to European integration matters and the systemic salience of the issue. The dependent variable is the change in the degree of attention to an issue domain at the current election compared to the previous election. I label this

<sup>11</sup>The following countries are included: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Great-Britain, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland.

variable  $[\Delta \text{Salience cultural [economic] issues}]$ . The key predictors are  $[\Delta \text{Systemic salience cultural [economic] issues}]$ , denoting changes in the systemic salience of issue domains between election  $t$  and election  $t - 1$ ,  $[\text{Challenger party (CP)}]$ ,  $[\text{Mainstream opposition party (MOP)}]$  and  $[\text{intra party balance of power (IPBP)}]$ . I estimate three models. The first model includes all parties and serves to examine the difference between mainstream and challenger parties. The second model includes mainstream parties only in order to examine the differences between mainstream government and mainstream opposition parties. The third model assesses the role of the intra party balance of power, and includes all parties. The specification of the three core models is as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \Delta \text{Salience cultural [economic] issues}_{i,t} = & \\ & \beta_0 + \beta_1 [\Delta \text{Systemic salience}_{i,t}] + \beta_2 [\text{CP}_{i,t}] \\ & + \beta_3 [\text{CP}_{i,t} \times \Delta \text{Systemic salience}_{i,t}] \\ & + [\text{controls}] + \epsilon_{i,t} \end{aligned} \quad (3.1)$$

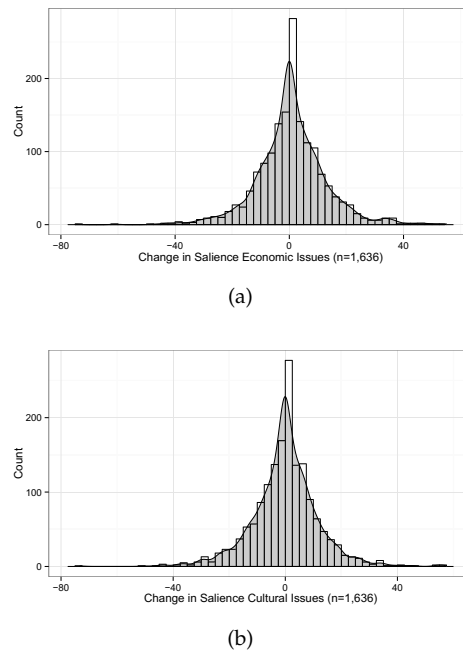
$$\begin{aligned} \Delta \text{Salience cultural [economic] issues}_{i,t} = & \\ & \beta_0 + \beta_1 [\Delta \text{Systemic salience}_{i,t}] + \beta_2 [\text{MOP}_{i,t}] \\ & + \beta_3 [\text{MOP}_{i,t} \times \Delta \text{Systemic salience}_{i,t}] \\ & + [\text{controls}] + \epsilon_{i,t} \end{aligned} \quad (3.2)$$

$$\begin{aligned} \Delta \text{Salience cultural [economic] issues}_{i,t} = & \\ & \beta_0 + \beta_1 [\Delta \text{Systemic salience}_{i,t}] + \beta_2 [\text{IPBP}_i] \\ & + \beta_3 [\text{IPBP}_i \times \Delta \text{Systemic salience}_{i,t}] \\ & + [\text{controls}] + \epsilon_{i,t} \end{aligned} \quad (3.3)$$

where subscript  $i$  denotes parties and  $t$  indicates time (election year). To illustrate the dependent variables in the models, figure 3.2 depicts their distributions.

The normal distributions of the dependent variables allow for model specifications building on the use of ordinary least squares (OLS) regressions. However, due to the time-series-cross-sectional (TSCS) structure of the data (the data is treated as pooled time-series with parties being the cross-sectional units that vary over time), several problems related to dependencies in the error terms might arise. Specifically, it is likely that variances in error terms differ across parties ('panel heteroskedasticity'); the errors terms of different parties in the same election year might correlate ('contemporaneous correlation'); and there is possible correlation between the error terms of subsequent election years within the same party ('serial correlation'). Several tests indeed indicate the presence of these types

FIGURE 3.2 – Distribution of Changes in Saliency of the Economic and Cultural Issue Domains



*Note:* Figure (a) shows the distribution of changes in the saliency of the economic issue domain. Figure (b) displays the distribution of changes in the saliency of the cultural issue domain. The shaded area under the solid line indicates the Kernel density plot.

of correlation in the data.<sup>12</sup> Accounting for panel heteroskedasticity and contemporaneous correlation, panel-corrected standard errors (PCSEs) are calculated (Beck and Katz, 1995, 1996). Further, a Prais-Winsten feasible generalized least squares (FGLS) procedure is used. Recent studies tend to prefer this solution to address the panel specific AR(1) error structure over the inclusion of a lagged dependent variable, as the latter is likely to introduce biases in the estimates (Plümper, Troeger and Manow, 2005; Achen, 2000). Fisher-type Phillips-Perron unit root tests (Choi, 2001) ensure that the dependent and independent variables are stationary.<sup>13</sup> Finally, I add country dummies to the right-hand side of the equation to eliminate country specific heterogeneity.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup>A Wooldridge test (Wooldridge, 2002; Drukker, 2003) was used to detect the presence of serial correlation in the data and a modified Wald test (Greene, 2000; Baum, 2001) suggested rejection of the null-hypothesis of no groupwise heteroskedasticity. The panels in the data are too unbalanced to perform a Pesaran test for contemporaneous correlation (Pesaran, 2004; de Hoyos and Sarafidis, 2006). Nevertheless, the estimation technique addresses this type of autocorrelation.

<sup>13</sup>I resort to the Fisher-type tests since conventional unit root tests (for example the augmented Dickey-Fuller test) are unavailable for unbalanced panel data structures

<sup>14</sup>I refrain from including party-level fixed effects since the theoretical interest of the chapter is to examine differences across party types within countries.

### 3.4.1 Reverse Causality & Omitted Variable Bias

Two potential problems arise with this design. The first relates to reverse causality. As noted by Adams and Somer-Topcu (2009), the statistical modelling of interaction in party competition comes with methodological challenges because of parties' reciprocal influence on one another. Green-Pedersen and Mortensen (2014, p.7) explain: "how does one determine that attention to issue  $i$  of party  $A$  at time  $t$  is influenced by attention to issue  $i$  of party  $B$  at time  $t$  and not the other way around?" Both Green-Pedersen and Mortensen (2014) and Adams and Somer-Topcu (2009) opt for a model specification in which only lagged explanatory variables are included. However, the hypotheses put forward in this chapter explicate associations between *changes* in the issue attention of individual parties and *changes* in the systemic salience of issue domains. Green-Pedersen and Mortensen (2014), by contrast, deal with levels of issue attention and not with change variables. Lagging the change variables would imply that changes in the systemic salience of issue domains between  $t - 2$  and  $t - 1$  affect changes in individual parties' issue attention from  $t - 1$  to  $t$ . Since we are dealing with election years, time  $t - 2$  will usually be around 6 to 8 years prior to time  $t$ , which will make an association between the two rather unlikely.

Therefore, I follow Steenbergen and Scott (2004) in their choice of model specification and refrain from including lagged explanatory variables. Instead, I model the direct association between changes (from  $t - 1$  to  $t$ ) in parties' issue emphases and the systemic salience of issue domains. I address the possibility of reverse causality – that is, the possibility that a shift in the issue emphasis of an individual party leads to a response of all the other parties in the system, thereby increasing the systemic salience of an issue domain – by running a simple Granger reverse causality model (Sargent, 1976). This involves using the dependent variable at  $t - 1$  to predict the independent variable at  $t$ .<sup>15</sup> Table B.1 in appendix B presents the results of these analyses. In five cases, the dependent variable at  $t - 1$  has a statistically significant effect on the independent variable at time  $t$ , which would imply reverse causality. However, the models denote in these cases, as in all cases, a negative estimated coefficient. This weakens the case of reverse causality, since the hypotheses derived above explicate a *positive* effect of systemic salience on individual party issue emphasis. Hence, if the empirical analysis confirms the hypotheses (i.e. exposes positive effects of systemic salience), reverse causality constitutes a bias against the results.

A second problem concerns omitted variable bias. A possible positive relationship between individual parties' issue emphases and the systemic salience of issue domains might, in fact, be driven by exogenous influences such as political crises (i.e. an economic crisis) or, most notably, by changes in public opinion. With regard to the latter, this would mean that an increase in attention to economic or cultural issues among voters might cause parties to change their issue agendas. Studies show, in this respect, how especially mainstream parties respond to shifts

<sup>15</sup>See Abou-Chadi (2014, p.13-14), who follows a similar procedure to assess reverse causality.

in voters' attitudes (Adams et al., 2004, 2006; Ezrow et al., 2011). One possible way to alleviate this problem is to include a measure of the salience of economic and cultural among voters as a control variable. Spoon, Hobolt and de Vries (2014) opt for such an approach when investigating the salience of environmental issues in party platforms.<sup>16</sup> Here, I follow Abou-Chadi (2014) and refrain from including such a variable since the salience of policy issues among voters is highly endogenous to the process under investigation: changes in parties' issue emphases. Indeed, as Abou-Chadi (2014) argues, the issue emphases of political elites determine to a large extent which policy issues are regarded as pressing among electorates. This does not rule out the possibility that other exogenous influences, such as economic crises, have an impact on both changes in the systemic salience of (economic) issue domains and parties' issue attention, although the inclusion of the GDP growth variable captures, at least partially, such effects.

### 3.5 Results

The hypotheses posit expectations regarding the differences between challenger and mainstream parties and between mainstream parties in- and out-of-office. In the first step of the analysis, therefore, I estimate models predicting party issue emphases including all parties (models 1-4) and including mainstream parties only (models 5-8). Table 3.4 reports the results of the regression analyses for models 1-4.

Models 1 and 2 predict parties' emphases on issues pertaining to the cultural issue domain. Because of the inclusion of the interaction terms, the coefficients for the variables indicating changes in systemic salience denote the effects for mainstream parties. The models suggest support for the hypothesis that there is an association between mainstream parties' issue appeals and the systemic salience of issue domains: the estimated coefficients ( $\beta = 0.38$ ;  $\beta = 0.46$ ) are positive and statistically significant. Model 2 implies that a 1 percentage point increase in the systemic salience of cultural issues is associated, on average and all else equal, with a .46 percentage point increase in the importance of these issues in a mainstream party's election manifesto. Model 3 and 4, predicting economic issue emphasis, yield similar results: the coefficients for the systemic salience variables ( $\beta = 0.45$ ;  $\beta = 0.52$ ) are positive and statistically significant.

The interaction terms between the systemic salience variable and the challenger party variable are included in order to evaluate the hypothesis that challengers are less responsive to rival parties than are mainstream parties. The negative sign of the estimated coefficients indicates support for this hypothesis. The effects are robust to the inclusion of the control variables, although the interactive term in model 2 is only significant at the 10% level.

Table 3.5 reports the results of the regression analyses for models 5-8, including mainstream parties only. Because of the inclusion of the interaction terms, the

<sup>16</sup>Spoon, Hobolt and de Vries (2014, p.377, footnote 11) note that excluding this variable from the models results in virtually similar results.

TABLE 3.4 – Pooled Time Series Regressions of Changes in Parties' Issue Emphases, 1950-2013

	<b>Model 1</b> <i>cultural</i> <i>issues</i>	<b>Model 2</b> <i>cultural</i> <i>issues</i>	<b>Model 3</b> <i>economic</i> <i>issues</i>	<b>Model 4</b> <i>economic</i> <i>issues</i>
(Constant)	−0.1191 (0.4951)	0.1944 (0.8404)	−0.3228 (0.3641)	0.6079 (0.8818)
$\Delta$ Systemic salience	0.3824*** (0.0281)	0.4601*** (0.0362)	0.4477*** (0.0365)	0.5183*** (0.0346)
Challenger Party (CP)	−0.9333*** (0.2164)	−0.3504 (0.2177)	0.7283*** (0.2340)	0.4775 (0.4218)
CP $\times$ $\Delta$ Systemic salience	−0.0884** (0.0397)	−0.0912* (0.0536)	−0.2756*** (0.0444)	−0.3576*** (0.0540)
Party size		0.0037 (0.0134)		−0.0060 (0.0151)
Ideological extremity		−0.4418*** (0.1356)		0.0191 (0.1407)
Vote change		−0.0143 (0.0383)		0.0703 (0.0462)
GDP		0.1312*** (0.0456)		−0.1608** (0.0697)
N	1636	937	1636	1003
Wald	713.4413	4107.5688	381.9127	708.8637

*Note:* Prais-Winsten regression coefficients with panel-corrected standard errors in parentheses and country dummies (not shown in table). \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$  (two-tailed tests).

coefficients for the variables indicating changes in systemic salience denote the effects for mainstream parties in government. The models indicate that adjustments in the issue profiles of mainstream parties in government are associated with shifts in the systemic salience of issue domains. The estimated coefficients for the systemic salience variable across all four models are positive and statistically significant. The interaction terms denote negative estimated effects, in line with the expectation that mainstream parties in opposition are less responsive to issue salience shifts in the party system agenda than are incumbent parties. The effects with regard to the cultural issue domain are statistically significant ( $\beta = -0.11$ ;  $\beta = -0.16$ ). Regarding the economic issue domain, the effects are negative ( $\beta = -0.06$ ;  $\beta = -0.04$ ) but fail to reach statistical significance.

Figure 3.3 summarizes the estimated coefficients for the interaction terms graphically by plotting the marginal effect of the systemic salience variable across the different party types. Plots (a) and (b) show the effects for mainstream and challenger parties. As becomes clear from figure 3.3(a), the difference between mainstream and challenger parties concerning the effect of systemic salience on the cultural issue domain is not statistically significant at the 95% level. This difference is, however, statistically significant at the 90% level, as can be inferred from table 3.4. The models suggest a statistically significant difference (at the 95% level) between challengers and mainstream parties with regard to the economic

TABLE 3.5 – Pooled Time Series Regressions of Changes in Mainstream Parties' Issue Emphases, 1950-2013

	<b>Model 5</b> <i>cultural</i> <i>issues</i>	<b>Model 6</b> <i>cultural</i> <i>issues</i>	<b>Model 7</b> <i>economic</i> <i>issues</i>	<b>Model 8</b> <i>economic</i> <i>issues</i>
(Constant)	−0.6917 (0.5158)	−0.2331 (1.1138)	−0.1381 (0.3336)	1.9676 (1.5598)
ΔSystemic salience	0.4005*** (0.0286)	0.5086*** (0.0415)	0.4742*** (0.0231)	0.5115*** (0.0523)
Mainstream Opposition Party (MOP)	0.4856 (0.3456)	1.2659** (0.5097)	−0.2313 (0.3409)	−0.9237* (0.4978)
MOP × ΔSystemic salience	−0.1125** (0.0488)	−0.1566** (0.0620)	−0.0624 (0.0486)	−0.0375 (0.0818)
Party size		−0.0053 (0.0149)		−0.0065 (0.0180)
Ideological extremity		0.1797 (0.1996)		−0.1079 (0.1976)
Vote difference		−0.0380 (0.0544)		0.0800 (0.0555)
GDP		0.1649** (0.0790)		−0.3002*** (0.1028)
N	1040	647	1040	696
Wald	44528.3920	422.8901	2500.3455	242.6774

Note: Prais-Winsten regression coefficients with panel-corrected standard errors in parentheses and country dummies (not shown in table). \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$  (two-tailed tests).

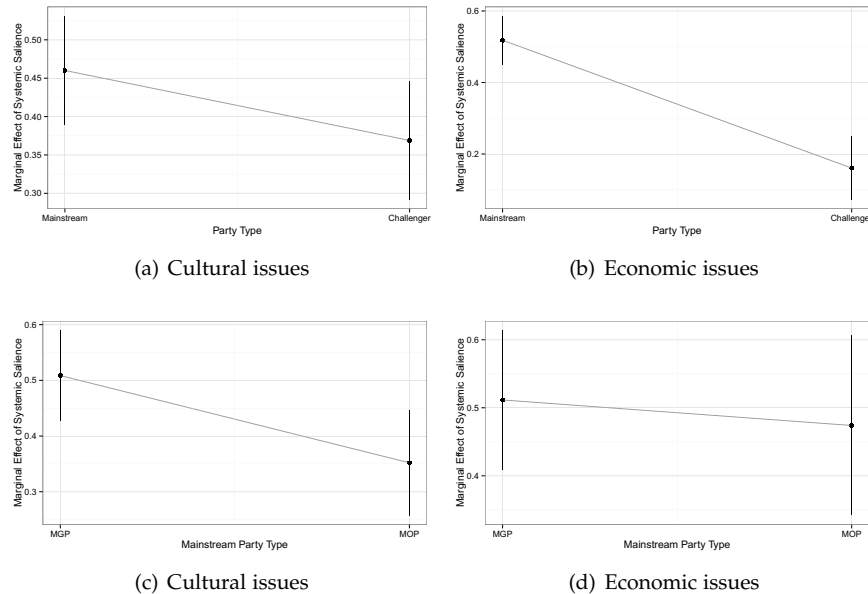
issue domain. Although there is a positive association between issue emphases and an increase in systemic salience for both types of parties, that is: they both increase their emphases on economic issues when the systemic salience of the issue domain increases, the magnitude of the effects is different. The models suggest that the association between mainstream parties' issue attention and systemic salience shifts is more than three times as strong when compared to the association between systemic salience shifts and challenger parties' issue salience.

Turning to the different effects for mainstream parties in- and out of office, as presented by plots (c) and (d), the models suggest a small difference on the cultural issue domain. The association between mainstream government parties' (MGPs) issue attention and increases in the systemic salience of cultural issues seems to be more pronounced as compared to the association between systemic salience changes and mainstream opposition parties' (MOPs) shifts in issue attention. The difference is significant at the 95% level. The models do not find differences between the two types of parties with respect to the economic issue domain.

In the second step of the analysis, I evaluate the intra party politics hypothesis. To that end, a series of models is estimated including, again, all parties and the variable measuring the intra party balance of power. Table 3.6 presents the results of the regression analyses.

Models 9-12 offer support for the notion that parties in which activists are

FIGURE 3.3 – Marginal Effects of Changes in Systemic Saliency of Issue Domains for Challenger vs Mainstream parties and Mainstream Opposition vs Mainstream Government Parties



*Note:* The figures show marginal effect plots with 95% confidence intervals. The marginal effect plots (a) and (b) are constructed using coefficient estimates from table 3.5, model 2 & model 4. Plots (c) and (d) are based on coefficient estimates from table 3.5, model 6 and model 8. The y-axes depict the marginal effect of the systemic saliency variables, the x-axes depict the different party types: mainstream vs challenger, plots (a) and (b); and mainstream opposition party (MOP) vs mainstream government party (MGP), plots (c) and (d).

powerful (i.e. with a score of '0' on the intra party balance of power scale) make saliency adjustments in their issue profiles in accordance with shifts in systemic saliency, as the estimated coefficients for the systemic saliency variables are positive and statistically significant across the models.

To examine the expectation that parties in which leaders are dominant are more responsive to the issue appeals of rival parties than are parties in which activists are dominant, an interaction term between the systemic saliency variable and the intra party balance of power variable is included. With regard to the models predicting issue emphasis on the cultural issue domain (models 9-10), the estimated coefficients of the interaction terms are negative, implying that parties in which leaders are powerful are *less* responsive to competitors than parties in which activists have more of a say. With regard to the economic issue domain, this seems to be the other way around. Models 11-12 imply a positive interactive effect: leadership-dominated parties are *more* responsive to systemic saliency shifts than activist-dominated parties.

Examining the significance and the direction of the interaction term alone is, however, likely to result in an incorrect assessment of the interactive relationship between variables (Brambor, Clark and Golder, 2006). Hence, the marginal effects



TABLE 3.6 – Pooled Time Series Regressions of Changes in Parties' Issue Emphases, 1950-2013

	<b>Model 9</b> <i>cultural</i> <i>issues</i>	<b>Model 10</b> <i>cultural</i> <i>issues</i>	<b>Model 11</b> <i>economic</i> <i>issues</i>	<b>Model 12</b> <i>economic</i> <i>issues</i>
(Constant)	−0.3483 (0.9333)	0.3961 (1.1150)	−0.9445 (1.1369)	0.5248 (1.5538)
ΔSystemic salience	0.4904*** (0.1250)	0.8076*** (0.1559)	0.3914*** (0.0984)	0.2397** (0.1132)
Intra Party Balance of Power (IPBP)	0.0599* (0.0347)	0.0266 (0.0381)	−0.0161 (0.0294)	0.0197 (0.0364)
IPBP×ΔSystemic salience	−0.0028 (0.0066)	−0.0158* (0.0082)	0.0020 (0.0055)	0.0108* (0.0062)
Challenger Party (CP)	−1.1729*** (0.3583)	−0.1021 (0.5043)	0.6415* (0.3653)	0.9397* (0.5343)
Party size		0.0085 (0.0178)		−0.0062 (0.0180)
Ideological extremity		−0.1437 (0.1894)		−0.0635 (0.1760)
Vote difference		−0.0216 (0.0501)		0.0797 (0.0513)
GDP		−0.0408 (0.1039)		−0.2126** (0.1042)
N	1293	816	1293	874
Wald	218.3708	258.2656	184.4954	166.0660

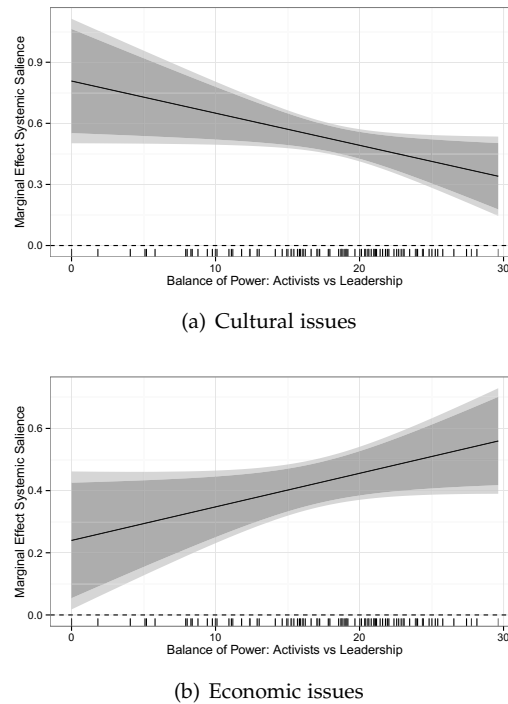
Note: Prais-Winsten regression coefficients with panel-corrected standard errors in parentheses and country dummies (not shown in table). \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$  (two-tailed tests).

plots in figure 3.4 graphically illustrate how the marginal effects of the systemic salience variable change across different values of the intra party balance of power scale.

Figure 3.4 displays how the effects of systemic salience across the intra party balance of power scale differ for the two issue domains. The decreasing slope of the marginal effects plot in figure 3.4(a) indicates that parties become less responsive to systemic salience shifts as leaders become more powerful. By contrast, the increasing slope of the marginal effects plot in figure 3.4(b) indicates that the estimated effect of systemic salience increases for parties in which the leadership is more powerful. For activist-dominated parties (i.e. a score of '0' on the intra party balance of power scale), a 1 percentage point shift in the systemic salience of the economic issue domain corresponds with about a 0.2 percentage point shift in the emphasis such a party places on economic issues, on average and all else equal. The magnitude of the effect for parties in which the leadership is dominant (i.e. the maximum score on the intra party balance of power scale) is, on average and *ceteris paribus*, about 0.5 percentage point.

Turning to the control variables, the effects of the GDP growth variable are worth mentioning. In all models, except for model 10, it has a positive and statistically significant effect on parties' attention to cultural issues. Hence, if the

FIGURE 3.4 – Marginal Effects of Changes in Systemic Saliency on Parties' Issue Saliency across Different Levels of Intra Party Balance of Power



*Note:* The marginal effects plots are constructed using coefficient estimates from table 3.6, model 10 & model 12. The y-axis depicts the marginal effect of the systemic saliency variable on issue emphasis across different levels of intra-party balance of power, the shaded areas reflect 90% and 95% confidence intervals. The tick marks on the x-axis indicate individual observations for the intra party balance of power variable.

economy is doing well, parties shift focus and highlight cultural issues. With regard to the economic issue domain, the effects are the other way around: parties increase the saliency they attach to economic matters when GDP growth rates are decreasing. These findings are in line with other recent work that shows how parties increase their emphasis on economic issues when the economy is doing poorly (Williams, Seki and Whitten, 2016).

All in all, the empirical analyses offer some degree of support for the core expectations as put forward in this chapter. Parties that have not been in government before (i.e. challenger parties) respond less strongly to changes in the systemic saliency of issue domains than do parties that have experience in government. However, this effect seems to be most pronounced with regard to the economic issue domain. Further, the evidence presented here seems to suggest that mainstream parties in government are somewhat more responsive to competitor parties than are mainstream opposition parties, although this is mainly the case on the cultural issue domain. In addition, intra party politics is suggested to have, indeed, a conditioning effect on issue responsiveness: if party leaders are

powerful, parties respond stronger to the growing importance of economic issues in the party system, if activists are powerful the response is less pronounced. With regard to the cultural issue domain, this effect seems to be the other way around.

### 3.6 Discussion

This chapter argues that the extent to which political parties respond to the issue appeals of competitors is affected by their competitive position in the party system and by the internal balance of power between leaders and activists. The findings presented here have several implications.

First, the findings as presented in this chapter offer support for the thesis that issue competition in European party systems is, to a large extent, characterized by issue engagement. This study suggests that the systemic salience of issue domains is associated with individual parties' issue attention. This result is in line with accounts describing the emergence of party system agendas. Green-Pedersen and Mortensen (2010, 2014) have shown that, in Denmark, parties' issue profiles exhibit a strong 'common agenda component'. Likewise, Steenbergen and Scott (2004, p.188) argue that "systemic salience [...] serves as an important constraint on parties" when it comes to the salience they attach to European integration issues. Here, it is shown that parties take into account the degree of salience that other parties allocate to broader issue categories when devising their own salience strategies. Hence, the argument that parties' systemically respond to the issue attention of their competitors is shown to hold beyond the Danish case and beyond the issue of European integration. Moreover, previous work on party interaction in issue competition focused mainly on the distinction between opposition and government parties (Green-Pedersen and Mortensen, 2014). This chapter maintains that is important to distinguish between opposition parties that have previously been in office and opposition parties that have never gained access to office (challenger parties). As such, it adds the insight that the threefold distinction between challenger, mainstream opposition and mainstream government parties captures differences in the extent to which parties respond to the issue appeals of their rivals.

The argument that issue engagement characterizes issue salience strategies represents an important theoretical innovation. Traditional theories have long focused on parties' incentives to differentiate themselves from their competitors by selectively emphasizing issues on which they dominate while downplaying the importance of issues that might benefit competitors. By going beyond the incentives for individual parties to campaign on selected issues, important new questions come to the fore, a crucial one being related to variation in the degree of responsiveness across parties. This chapter's findings indicate that party type (challenger versus mainstream) and internal organizational structures (leaders versus activists) affect the extent to which parties respond to one another, and they represent, as such, a first attempt to address such questions.

The finding that parties systematically respond to the issue attention of competitors also has normative implications. Issue engagement in election campaigns should help voters reach informed electoral decision (Damore, 2005; Sigelman and Buell, 2004; Green-Pedersen and Mortensen, 2014). If parties 'talk about the same issues' it should, for example, become easier for voters to observe differences between their proposed policy solutions. Hence, the results presented here suggest that parties' strategic position in the party system – as being a mainstream or challenger party – and parties' internal organizational structures affect the probability that election campaigns are characterized by issue engagement.

Moreover, the findings presented in this chapter have implications for our understanding of the politicization of non-economic issues. Although such issues have generally been on the rise in western European party systems over the last couple of decades, there is considerable variation across time and space in the extent to which the 'second dimension of politics' has been politicized. As Tavits and Potter (2015, p.1) note: "our understanding of why this second dimension might be more salient on the agendas of some parties rather than others – or in some elections rather than in others – lags behind our understanding of party position taking on a generalized left-right dimension." The evidence in this chapter corroborates other studies that perceive challenger parties to be the initiators of issue politicization (de Vries and Hobolt, 2012; Hobolt and de Vries, 2015). Challengers, it is suggested in this chapter, push forward their own agenda, which tends to be more focused on cultural issues, and largely ignore shifts in the systemic salience of the economic issue domain.

Further, this chapter relates to a literature on the role of intra party politics. Increasingly, empirical studies of party behaviour go beyond the restrictive assumption that party leaders are unconstrained in setting party policy decisions, and acknowledge that parties are political coalitions in which diverging opinions and preferences are united (see also Hertner, 2015). The results in this chapter suggest that party organization mediates the degree of responsiveness to shifts in the systemic salience of issue domains. As such, it speaks to other recent work that consider party organization to be a conditional variable when explaining (changes in) issue agendas (Schumacher, de Vries and Vis, 2013; Wagner and Meyer, 2014; de Sio and Weber, 2014).

The findings here also give rise to several questions, a crucial one being related to the fact that some of the effects differ across issue domains. How to explain, for example, the diverging effects of intra party politics when comparing the economic and the cultural issue domain? Previous research implies, in this respect, that parties are generally hesitant to politicize issues that fall outside of the main dimension of political contest, which is in western Europe mainly based on economic issues (Benoit and Laver, 2006). The potential political costs of politicizing non-economic issues are significant since parties' electorates tend to be divided on these issues (van Kersbergen and Krouwel, 2008; Bale et al., 2010), giving parties an incentive to de-emphasize those issues (van de Wardt,

2014b). Moreover, politicizing non-economic issues risks parties' coalition potential (Green-Pedersen, 2012) and might benefit issue entrepreneurs promoting such issues (Meguid, 2005). As such, promoting the cultural issue domain is likely to negatively impact parties' vote- and office-seeking motivations, which especially compromises the positions of party leaders. This could explain why parties in which leaders are powerful seem to respond less strongly to shifts in the systemic salience of the cultural issue domain, and more strongly to shifts in the importance of the economic issue domain. Future research on the important topic of party interaction in issue competition should further develop this line of argumentation.

---

## Appealing Broadly or Narrowing Down?

### Explaining the Scope of Parties' Issue Agendas

---

---

*\*Earlier versions of this chapter were presented at the European Graduate Network Conference (2015, Florence) and at the Joint Sessions of Workshops of the European Consortium for Political Research (2015, Warsaw). I thank Nicolas Sauger, Laura Stephenson, Lawrence Ezrow, Hans Keman, Michael Marsh, Christoffer Green-Pedersen, Daniel Bischof, Gijs Schumacher, Tarik Abou-Chadi, Ruth Dassonneville, Fabio Wolkenstein, Ann-Kristin Kölln, Nicolas Merz, Holger Döring, Koen Damhuis, Denis Cohen, Julia Partheymüller, Thomas Maruhn & Jelle Koedam for their valuable comments.*

*\*A revised version of this chapter has been published as:*

Van Heck, Sjoerd (2016) "Appealing Broadly or Narrowing Down? The Impact of Government Experience and Party Organization on the Scope of Parties' Issue Agendas"

*Party Politics*, Published Online before Print July 5, 2016.

doi: 10.1177/1354068816657374

“ Forget about those on the left who say I shouldn’t talk about Europe, crime or lower taxes or those on the right who say I shouldn’t talk about the NHS, the environment or wellbeing. That is a false choice and one I will not make. ”

---

David Cameron, *Leader of the British Conservative Party*, 2007

In September 2007, David Cameron addressed an audience of party candidates and activists in London. He responded to critics from both wings of his party, arguing that he would not make a “false choice” between talking about traditional party issues and issues that would modernize the party. He insisted on his strategy of increasing the scope of the Conservative Party’s agenda by emphasizing both traditional and new issues in order to move the party back to the center ground of British politics.<sup>1</sup>

## 4.1 Introduction

WHAT EXPLAINS THE DYNAMICS of parties’ issue attention strategies? Most studies examine increases or decreases in the salience of *specific* (groups of) issues (see for example Meguid, 2005; van de Wardt, 2015). This chapter takes a different approach and considers parties’ *entire* issue profile. It explores how the dynamics of *issue attention diversity* can be explained. Issue attention diversity refers to the *scope* of parties’ policy agendas: do parties present a rather broad and encompassing agenda to voters, or do they narrow down their attention focusing on a few issues they deem important? This is an important question since the shape of an agenda influences the choices made from it (Riker, 1993a).

Nevertheless, there has been only limited attention for issue attention diversity in empirical studies of party competition. Hobolt, Klemmensen and Pickup (2008) have studied ‘issue diversity’ in speeches of political leaders, but only in two countries (Britain and Denmark). Other studies consider ‘issue diversification’ a vote-seeking strategy. Thus, by increasing the scope of their agenda, parties aim at appealing to a broader electorate and hope to become more ‘catch all’

---

<sup>1</sup>The quote is taken from Bale (2011, p.349). In September 2007, Cameron was leading the Conservative Party in its opposition to the Labour government. One newspaper described his efforts to modernize his party by “bringing gay rights, the environment and a more emotional tone to the Tory agenda” (the Economist, 2015). For accounts of Cameron’s strategy of moving his party to the center by combining new and traditional issues, see Bale (2011, chapter 7) and Green (2011).

(Somer-Topcu, 2015; Lacewell, 2013). However, in some instances it might be rational for parties to decrease their issue diversity and pursue core vote strategies (Green, 2011). Hence, an assessment of the dynamics of issue attention diversity should take into account movement in both directions: increasing *and* decreasing the scope of the agenda. Greene (2015) presents evidence that issue diversity is linked to the state of the economy: government parties present, generally speaking, broader agendas than do opposition parties as to defend their record in office; but when the economy is performing well they narrow down their agenda in order to emphasize their performance.

This chapter aims to contribute to our understanding of the dynamics of parties' issue attention diversity by employing Greene (2015) concept of the effective number of manifesto issues (ENMI). It departs from previous studies by highlighting two aspects. First, it argues that the crucial distinction is not between opposition and government parties, but rather between challenger and mainstream parties, as this latter distinction more adequately describes parties' relative competitive positions in multi-party systems. Second, intraparty politics, specifically the balance of power between party activists and party leaders, affects the scope of parties' issue agendas.

This first argument reflects the assumption that political losers, understood here as challenger parties, want to change the status quo of politics by actively seeking and promoting new lines of conflict (i.e. new issues) (Carmines and Stimson, 1986). As they need to focus most of their attention on these issues as to move them to the top of the party system agenda, they will present confined and specific policy agendas. Previous research has demonstrated how challenger parties adopt issue entrepreneurial strategies and seek to politicize European integration issues (de Vries and Hobolt, 2012; Hobolt and de Vries, 2015; van de Wardt, 2015). This chapter considers a party's platform as a whole and argues that non-governing challenger parties also respond to their unfavourable position by presenting narrow issue agendas. Mainstream parties, on the other hand, seek to reinforce existing patterns of competition and distribute their issue attention broadly.

The second argument highlights the notion that there is a struggle over issue strategies *within* parties. Party activists want the party to focus on its core issues. The leadership of the party, however, is tempted by the potential electoral gains of a strategy of issue diversification that reaches out to many different constituencies (Somer-Topcu, 2015). Thus, parties in which leaders are dominant should have a broader issue profile than parties in which activists have more of a say. Pooled time series analyses of the issue attention diversity of parties from 18 European countries between 1950 and 2013 lend support to these theoretical propositions.

The remainder of this chapter is structured as follows. First, the literature on issue-competition and party organization is briefly discussed after which hypotheses on issue attention diversity are derived. Second, data sources, operationalization of the variables of interest and the estimation technique are discussed. After



presenting and discussing the empirical results the chapter closes with highlighting the implications of its findings and sketching possible avenues for further research.

## 4.2 The Politics of Issue Attention Diversity

Not only what positions to take on issues, but also which issues to emphasize and which to ignore, and how many issues to address, are key decisions for partisan elites in election campaigns. Adjusting the salience of issues might even be a more attractive strategy for parties since positional changes come with costs: party supporters might be alienated, activists might disagree with the new policy course and voters might perceive it as opportunistic flip-flopping.<sup>2</sup> Increasing or decreasing the importance of issues in parties' communication to the public seems more straightforward and less likely to endanger a party's reputation. Studies indeed show how parties downplay the salience of an issue if, for example, the party's base is divided on that issue (van de Wardt, 2014b; Steenbergen and Scott, 2004). Issue salience decisions are as much a part of the strategic toolkit of parties as issue positioning (see for example Meguid, 2005; Wagner and Meyer, 2014; Meyer and Wagner, 2013).

The process of *issue selection* goes at the core of such salience strategies. It implies that parties must decide (1) how many issues to select for the campaign and (2) which issues that will be (Aragonès, Castanheira and Giani, 2015). These questions are, arguably, interrelated and the literature suggests two alternative issue selection strategies.

First, parties may choose to present a specific and focused agenda, confining their attention to a few issues on which they have a clear advantage. This view is informed by salience theory, which argues that politicians 'selectively emphasize' issues that are favorable to them while deemphasizing issues that might harm them (Budge and Farlie, 1983; Robertson, 1976) – a logic Riker (1993b) formalized in the principles of *dominance* and *dispersion*.<sup>3</sup> A party stands to gain from a certain issue (it can *dominate* on an issue) when it succeeds to establish 'ownership', for example because it has a track record of successfully handling the issue when in government (Petrocik, 1996). An idea that is closely related to this is the 'core vote strategy', which in terms of issue salience implies that parties focus on issues of interest to the party base rather than the electorate at large (Green, 2011, p.736).

Second, parties may broaden their focus and present a diverse agenda including many different issues, as they face incentives to go beyond addressing their core issues. Issue ownership is not fixed; it is a dynamic process rather than a stable condition (Seeberg, 2014; Walgrave, Lefevere and Nuytemans, 2009) and

<sup>2</sup>Moreover, a debate has emerged as to what extent voters actually perceive parties' positional changes; see Adams, Ezrow and Somer-Topcu (2011) and Fernandez-Vazquez (2014).

<sup>3</sup>According to Riker (1993b, p.81-82), the principles of dominance and dispersion guide the rhetorical efforts of politicians. The dominance principle holds that when one side successfully wins the argument, the other side ignores the issue whereas the winner continues to exploit it. The principle of dispersion states that when both sides fail to win the argument on an issue, both sides will cease to discuss it and search for another issue.

politicians might thus attempt to ‘steal’ ownership from their competitors (Holian, 2004) or try to claim newly politicized issues. More generally, a ‘broad appeal’ strategy, reaching out to diverse groups of voters, is attractive to parties insofar as it is likely to bring electoral advantages (Kirchheimer, 1966; Somer-Topcu, 2015). One way of achieving this goal is for parties to moderate their policy positions as to approach the median voter position (Downs, 1957); another, less risky strategy,<sup>4</sup> is to add more issues to the party agenda. In the latter case, the party diversifies in the hope of appealing to a broader electorate.

Issue salience strategies are thus characterized by a trade-off for parties between ‘speaking to the base’ by presenting a confined, focused and specific agenda that is limited in scope and reaching out to a wider electorate by presenting a broad and diversified agenda (cf. de Sio and Weber, 2014). A similar trade-off has been observed by Rohrschneider and Whitefield (2012), who argue that parties struggle to reconcile the demands of party voters and non-aligned independents. Panagopoulos (2015, p.1) likewise speaks of a ‘mobilization versus persuasion’ trade-off as there is a tension for parties between “speaking to the base” and “persuading independents.”

The extent to which parties prefer one strategy to the other depends, I argue, on two things. First, the competitive position that a party occupies in the party system matters. In a two-party system, this reflects the difference between parties in and out of office; in a multi-party setting the crucial distinction is between mainstream parties and challenger parties. Second, intra-party politics, specifically the balance of power between party activists and the party leadership, informs agenda scope strategies. In the following I develop these two arguments in more detail.

#### 4.2.1 Experience in Government and Issue Attention Diversity

I assume that party competition in multi-party settings can be described as an iterative strategic game between *challenger* and *mainstream* parties, following the framework proposed by de Vries and Hobolt (2012). The basic insight is that multi-party system consist of mainstream parties that regularly participate in coalition governments, but that are sometimes also excluded from office, and challenger parties, that have not previously held office (and might never hold office in the future) (see also Hobolt and Karp, 2010). As such, one can, at any given election, distinguish between *challenger parties*, *mainstream opposition parties* and *mainstream government parties* based on their different roles in the party system (de Vries and Hobolt, 2012, p.250). There are two reasons why these different types of parties would pursue different issue diversity strategies.

First, incumbent parties are tied to their record in office, which they need to defend as they are being held responsible for policy solutions by voters (Green-Pedersen and Mortensen, 2010). Government parties are expected to have stances on all the important issues of the day. They have to come up with solutions for the

---

<sup>4</sup>For arguments stressing the electoral *costs* of moderating policy positions, especially the risk for parties to alienate their core supporters and party activists, see Aldrich (1983); Karreth, Polk and Allen (2013).

many policy problems that face contemporary societies, and an incumbent party that ignores issues for which it was (at least partly) responsible in office runs the risk of being perceived as trying to avoid accountability for its actions. To some extent, the same holds for opposition parties with office aspirations, as they need to show that they present credible alternatives for government. On the other hand, empirical studies show that opposition parties are less constrained in their programmatic issue strategies than government parties, and that they pick specific issues to attack incumbents on (Green-Pedersen and Mortensen, 2010; Seeberg, 2013; Meyer and Wagner, 2013; Bevan and John, 2016). Klingemann, Hofferbert and Budge (1994, p.28) likewise grasp the distinction between government and opposition parties: “incumbents have a record, the opposition has only its words.” Out-of-office parties are not forced to respond to all issues in the same way government parties are and instead focus strongly on selected issues that they deem strategically favourable. Hence, we would expect opposition parties to present policy agendas that are narrower in scope than the agendas of incumbents.

Second, the distinction between challenger parties and mainstream parties corresponds to the divide between political losers and winners in multiparty systems (de Vries and Hobolt, 2012). According to theories of ‘issue evolution’ and ‘issue entrepreneurship’, politicians who occupy losing positions in the system seek to advance their situation by promoting conflict on new issues while political winners aim at maintaining the status quo (Carmines and Stimson, 1986; de Vries and Hobolt, 2012). ‘Heresthetics’ is Riker’s (1986) label to describe the effort of political losers to select issues as to strategically manipulate the environment in which political preferences are coordinated into collective outcomes.<sup>5</sup> In a multiparty setting, this implies that mainstream parties, who regularly alternate between opposition and government status, want to reproduce existing patterns of competition. As de Vries and Hobolt (p.250 2012) put it: “owing to their overall advantageous position in the system, mainstream parties have an incentive to reinforce existing patterns of political competition and the policy issues underlying them”. They shy away from mobilizing around new issues, since this would make it more difficult to enter into coalition government (Hobolt and Tilley, 2016, p.974). Rather, mainstream parties seek to stabilize the structure of the political issue space. Therefore, they appeal broadly, distributing their attention across a wide range of issues.

Challenger parties, on the other hand, attempt to upset the political status quo and confine their issue appeals. They focus, for example, strongly on issues that are largely neglected by mainstream parties, such as European integration (de Vries and Hobolt, 2012; van de Wardt, de Vries and Hobolt, 2014). As a result, the diversity in these parties’ issue appeals is reduced. They alter their issue strategies once their relative position within the party system has improved. Hence, challengers abandon issue entrepreneurial strategies – and broaden their issue appeals – after they have been rewarded with access to office. This is because

<sup>5</sup>Riker (1986) makes an analytical distinction between ‘rhetoric’, as the art of arguing about political issues using persuasion, and ‘heresthetics’, as the art of selecting issues.

their ‘reference point’ has now changed (van de Wardt, 2015). The experience of many green parties is telling in this regard. Staying in power, after the experience of attaining power, has increasingly become an end in itself for these parties. Rihoux and Rüdiger (2006, s20-21) argue that green parties’ strategic goals have been “significantly modified by their participation in power.” To give an example, the German green party, during their first period in office, adopted a political programme that outlined a new ideological direction for the party (Rihoux and Rüdiger, 2006, s20). Similar to many other green parties, it sought to broaden its issue profile beyond environmental matters (Bischof, 2015, p.5). I formalize these considerations about the impact of experience in government on issue attention diversity in the following hypotheses:

**H<sub>1a</sub>:** Mainstream government parties present broader policy agendas than mainstream opposition parties

**H<sub>1b</sub>:** Challenger parties present more confined policy agendas than mainstream parties

#### 4.2.2 Intra Party Politics and Issue Attention Diversity

So far, I have assumed that the behaviour of political parties is uniformly informed by a similar goal (i.e. gaining access to office), and I have considered the extent to which they are likely to succeed in achieving that goal (captured by the distinction between challenger and mainstream parties). This is a restrictive assumption, as parties have different, and mutually conflicting, strategic goals (Müller and Strøm, 1999).

Parties differ in the extent to which they, in fact, seek access to office. A party’s motivation to adopt a broad issue profile is likely driven by vote-seeking and office-seeking incentives. If parties present diverse issue agendas, they aim to reach out to voters beyond their core supporters, seeking to represent large and diverse shares of the electorate. These ‘catch-all’ strategies may convince different groups of voters that the party will represent their interests when in office. In the literature, such issue strategies are often associated with vote gains. Somer-Topcu (2015, p.842), for example, calls a broad appeal strategy a “recipe for electoral success.” Larger vote shares suggest greater coalition bargaining power and, hence, increased chances of participating in coalition government. As such, adopting a broad issue profile likely serves parties’ office-seeking motivations.

However, parties differ in the extent to which they favour these objectives over other strategic goals. Parties’ optimal vote- and office-seeking strategies often conflict with the pursuit of policy goals (Harmel and Janda, 1994; Pedersen, 2012). Parties that mainly seek to satisfy policy goals will strongly emphasize issues that are of central importance to them (Wagner and Meyer, 2014). Parties are commonly associated with specific issues in voters’ minds (Walgrave, Lefevere and Tresch, 2012), and often these are issues that ‘define’ the party and played an important role in its emergence. A policy-seeking party is likely to prioritise advancing these issues over adopting a broad issue profile. A party of this

kind focuses strongly on a few core issues. This implies presenting a specific and confined policy agenda. As a result, policy-oriented parties are expected to narrow down their issue profiles while office-oriented parties are expected to appeal broadly.

But what, then, determines how parties resolve the trade-off between policy and office objectives? The goal structure of political parties is shaped by the considerations of actors within parties and the balance of power between them. Internal organizational structures thus affect party behaviour (Kitschelt, 1989, 1994; Pedersen, 2010, 2012; Ceron, 2012; Ware, 1992; Schumacher, de Vries and Vis, 2013; Wagner and Meyer, 2014). The key actors here are party leaders and party activists. Leaders are pragmatic ‘office-seekers’ whereas activists are ‘policy-motivated’ and less pragmatic (Strøm, 1990; Müller and Strøm, 1999; Schlesinger, 1975; Aldrich, 2011). Panebianco (1988) refers to activists in this context as ‘believers’. They prefer the party not to deviate too much from its original agenda. Leaders have wider “policy limits” (Pedersen, 2012, p.901) than activists and are tempted by the possible electoral gains of the ‘appeal broadly’ strategy. Nevertheless, to secure their survival, even pragmatic office-seeking leaders will have to cater to an internally powerful activist base. Activist-dominated parties are therefore “under pressure to maintain the party’s focus on its key traditional areas of strength” (Meyer and Wagner, 2013, p.1023). Summing up, I expect parties whose leaders are less constrained to have a broader issue focus than parties in which activists are more dominant. This leads to the following hypothesis:

**H<sub>2a</sub>:** Activist-dominated parties present more confined agendas than leadership-dominated parties

In addition to having a direct effect, party organization is also likely to condition the extent to which parties respond to external stimuli (Schumacher, de Vries and Vis, 2013). Given the incentives for office-oriented parties to appeal broadly, and for policy-oriented parties to narrow down their issue appeals, it is not likely that both types of parties will respond in the same way to experience with government participation. Specifically, out-of-government parties in which activists dominate are likely to pursue core vote strategies and present narrow issue agendas while non-governing leadership-oriented parties are likely to give in to vote- and office-seeking pressures. As such, party organizational features should have a conditioning impact on the differences in issue diversity between mainstream government parties (MGPs) and mainstream opposition parties (MOPs) (H1a) and between challenger and mainstream parties (H1b). This leads to the following conditional hypotheses:

**H<sub>2b</sub>:** The effect of MGP status on issue attention diversity is greater for activist-dominated parties than for leadership-dominated parties

**H<sub>2c</sub>:** The effect of challenger status on issue attention diversity is greater for activist-dominated parties than for leadership-dominated parties

### 4.2.3 External Shocks and Issue Attention Diversity

When do parties *change* the scope of their agenda? Generally speaking, parties introduce changes in their policy platforms after experiencing negative ‘external shocks’, reflecting the assumption that parties do not just change their strategies for the sake of change but only when there is good cause (Harmel and Janda, 1994). This includes, most notably, losing elections (Somer-Topcu, 2009; Budge, 1994; Budge, Ezrow and McDonald, 2010) and losing access to office (Schumacher, de Vries and Vis, 2013). In terms of issue attention diversity, parties have after such a shock two possible options: decreasing *or* increasing the scope of their agenda.

The first refers to a strategy of mobilizing the party’s base, for example after a bad show at the polls or after losing access to office, to energize party supporters and lock in their vote. The British Conservative Party, condemned to a role in opposition in 1997 after eighteen years of governing, sought to ‘go back’ to its core vote base in the 2001 and 2005 election campaigns, focusing on issues of interest to conservative voters rather than to the electorate at large (Bale, 2011, p.11). This strategy ended with the leadership of David Cameron, who changed “the Conservative party’s image by focusing on new issues” (Green, 2011, p.737).

The second strategy refers to parties’ attempts to increase its electoral support by appealing to a more diverse electorate. When the Christian-Democrats in the Netherlands, another ‘natural party of government’, were in 1994 excluded from office for the first time in their history, the party set up an internal strategic advice group to draft a new programmatic manifest, which put more emphasis on previously neglected issues such as crime and security (Duncan, 2007, p.80). Thus, I put forward the following hypothesis:

**H<sub>3a</sub>:** Mainstream parties change the scope of their agenda after loosing votes and after being excluded from office

Note that I do not explicate a directional shift, but rather an *absolute* shift in agenda scope. Both increasing (as in the example of the Dutch Christian-Democrats) and decreasing (as in the example of the British Conservatives) the scope of the agenda represent rational responses for mainstream parties after experiencing external shocks. As such, I expect parties to change their issue attention diversity without explicating the direction of the change. Thus, the theoretical framework developed here allows for explaining different *levels* of issue attention diversity across parties as well as absolute changes therein.

Further, this part of the theoretical framework focuses on mainstream parties. External shocks only function as stimuli for parties to change their strategy if it impacts their primary goal (Harmel and Janda, 1994). In the mainstream-challenger framework, challenger parties’ main goal is to change the structure of political conflict by concentrating on the issues neglected by the mainstream. Therefore, the external shocks as explicated above should not impact their agenda,

as their narrow and confined issue strategy is already a response to their unfavorable position in the political system.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, it seems reasonable to expect the impact of vote loss and office exclusion to be greater for parties that are driven by vote- and office-seeking motivations. Therefore, I explicate a conditional relationship:

**H<sub>3b</sub>:** Mainstream parties are more likely to change the scope of their agenda after loosing votes and after being excluded from office if the internal balance of power favors the leadership

Departing from traditional issue salience theories, recent work has emphasized how parties' issue strategies are conditional upon other parties' strategies (Adams and Somer-Topcu, 2009; Meguid, 2005) (see also chapter 3). The literature tends to focus on the incentives for mainstream parties to respond to the issue appeals as put forward by so-called 'issue entrepreneurs' (Spoon, Hobolt and de Vries, 2014; Rooduijn, de Lange and van der Brug, 2014; Bale et al., 2010; Schumacher and van Kersbergen, 2014) (see also chapter 5). If mainstream parties indeed engage in political competition on the new issue dimensions promoted by issue entrepreneurs, their issue focus becomes broader.

However, mainstream parties have to take into account that their response may further legitimize an issue, as such boost electoral support for the challenger and unintentionally backfire at the party (Bale, 2003). Ignoring the challenge is thus an alternative strategy (Meguid, 2005; Abou-Chadi, 2014). If a mainstream party chooses this latter strategy, then it needs to find another way to neutralize the electoral threat posed by the challenger. In such a scenario, mainstream parties, enjoying relative advantages over challenger parties because they are usually perceived by voters as being more credible and because they have better access to the media (Meguid, 2005), can use their agenda setting power to try to influence the political agenda by diverting attention away from the challenger party's issue. One way to do this is to confine their own agenda and focus on the issues on which they traditionally have had an advantage. This implies decreasing the scope of the agenda.

Taken together, it seems reasonable to expect that mainstream parties change their issue strategies in response to electoral successes of challenger parties. Since vote gains of competitor parties compromise a mainstream party's vote- and ultimately office-seeking objectives, the impact of the electoral success of challengers on agenda scope should be more pronounced for parties in which leaders are especially powerful. Hence, similar to hypothesis 3b, I explicate a conditional hypothesis as well:

**H<sub>3c</sub>:** Mainstream parties change the scope of their agenda when challenger parties gain more electoral strength

---

<sup>6</sup>Moreover, challenger parties cannot respond to the 'shock' of office exclusion as they never enjoyed the spoils of office.

**H<sub>3d</sub>:** Mainstream parties are more likely to change the scope of their agenda when challenger parties gain more electoral strength if the internal balance of power favors the leadership

### 4.3 Data and Methodology

To test the hypotheses spelled out above, I use a data set covering 259 political parties in 18 European democracies<sup>7</sup> in the period 1950-2013.<sup>8</sup>

To assess parties' issue attention diversity, the dependent variable in this study, I use data from the Manifesto Project (MRG-CMP-MARPOR) (Volkens et al., 2014; Klingemann et al., 2006; Budge et al., 2001). The MRG-CMP-MARPOR project uses codings of party manifestos to categorize quasi-sentences in 56 issue categories. This allows for assessing parties' relative emphasis on issues in their election manifesto. To date, the MRG-CMP-MARPOR project provides the only data set available that is suitable for measuring parties' issue salience strategies over a long period of time across a large number of parties. The manifesto data has been subject to a vivid methodological debate, but this mainly concerns inferring policy positions from the data (Gemenis, 2013). For the purpose of this study, I am only interested in the distribution of attention, that is: that is, how narrowly or widely attention is distributed across issues in manifestos.

There are two ways to calculate *issue attention diversity* in party manifestos. First, one could calculate the 'effective number of issues' in a manifesto, similar to the calculation of the effective number of parties (Laakso and Taagepera, 1979). Lacewell (2013) opts for this approach. Likewise, Hobolt, Klemmensen and Pickup (2008) use the inverse (normalized) Herfindahl-Hirschman Index, on which the formula for the effective number of parties is based, to measure issue diversity in political speeches. Here, I follow Greene (2015) who uses Shannon's H to capture issue attention diversity.<sup>9</sup> Shannon's H is calculated as follows:

$$\text{Shannon's } H = - \sum_{i=1}^n (p(x_i)) \times \ln p(x_i) \quad (4.1)$$

where  $x_i$  represents an item;  $p(x_i)$  is the proportion of total attention the item receives; and  $\ln(x_i)$  is the natural log of the proportion of attention the item receives.

Shannon's H, developed in information- and communication theory (Shannon and Weaver, 1949), has been increasingly applied in political science literature, especially in studies of policy agendas (Jennings et al., 2011; Halpin and

<sup>7</sup>The following countries are included: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Great-Britain, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland; I select parties operating in western European party systems since varying patterns of issue diversification have been observed in these systems (Green-Pedersen, 2007b).

<sup>8</sup>For countries that have not been democratic during the entire period, the data starts with the first democratic election.

<sup>9</sup>The inverse Herfindahl-Hirschman Index index and Shannon's H as measures of attention diversity correlate strongly: Hobolt, Klemmensen and Pickup (2008, p.13) report a correlation of "above .9" between both indicators and Greene (2015, footnote 22) finds a correlation coefficient of .975



Thomas III, 2012; Sheingate, 2006; McCombs and Zhu, 1995). In contrast to the Herfindahl-Hirschman Index, Shannon's H increases along with the number of items via the  $\ln(x_i)$ . As such, it takes into account rising uncertainty associated with an increase in the number of possible outcomes (Sheingate, 2006, p.847). To put it simply: the measure distinguishes between the use of, for example, four out of five possible items and four out of ten possible items (see also Boydstun, Bevan and Thomas, 2014, p.183).

Moreover, using a series of simulations, Boydstun, Bevan and Thomas (2014) compared the Herfindahl-Hirschman to Shannon's H and found that the latter better captures changes in diversity at (already) high and low levels of diversity. As such, they concluded that Shannon's H is a more 'sensitive' measure, such that, compared to the Herfindahl-Hirschman Index, "equal increases and decreases in diversity have relatively equally sized effects on the diversity measure, regardless on where on the range of diversity they occur" (Boydstun, Bevan and Thomas, 2014, p.180). For these reasons, I refrain from using the Herfindahl-Hirschman Index and instead opt for Shannon's H to capture issue attention diversity. Following Greene (2015) I transform Shannon's H into a measure of issue attention diversity as follows:

$$\text{Issue Attention Diversity} = \exp\left(-\sum_{i=1}^n (p(x_i)) \times \ln p(x_i)\right) \quad (4.2)$$

Consider the following example, assuming a manifesto with four equally salient issues:

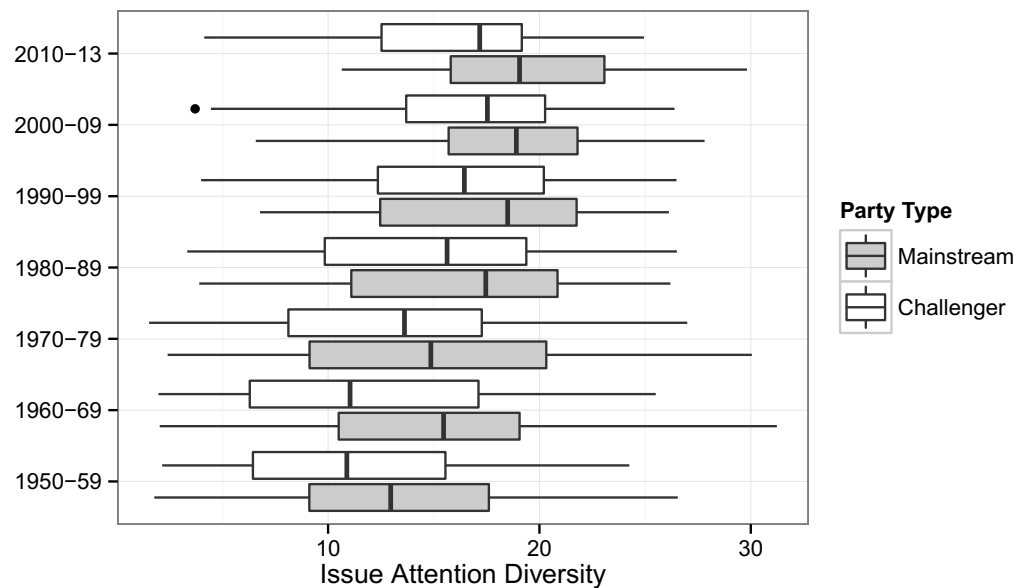
$$\begin{aligned} \text{Issue Attention Diversity} = & \exp\left(-\sum_{i=1}^{42} (.25(x_1)) \times \ln .25(x_1) + (.25(x_2)) \times \ln .25(x_2) \right. \\ & + (.25(x_3)) \times \ln .25(x_3) + (.25(x_4)) \times \ln .25(x_4) \\ & + (0(x_5)) \times \ln 0(x_5) + \dots + (0(x_{42})) \times \ln 0(x_{42})) \\ & \left. = 4 \right) \end{aligned} \quad (4.3)$$

Equation 4.3 shows that the formula yields 4 in this hypothetical case.<sup>10</sup> The MRG-CMP-MARPOR coding scheme includes 28 so-called 'paired policy dimensions', such as 'European Integration: Positive (per108)' and 'European Integration: Negative (per110)'. In order not to overestimate issue attention diversity, and count similar issues twice, I collapse these 28 categories into 14 paired issues, following the recommendations by Lowe et al. (2011). Hence, the theoretical range of the issue attention diversity is between 1 and 42. The empirical range is 1.5-31.2.

Figure 4.1 displays the distribution of issue attention diversity by party type and by time period using box plots. It shows that parties seem to have increased their issue attention diversity over time (cf. Greene, 2015). This supports analyses of parties' tendencies to become more 'catch all' (Kirchheimer, 1966) as well as

<sup>10</sup>The natural logarithm of zero is treated as 0.

FIGURE 4.1 – Issue Attention Diversity by Party Type, 1950-2013



descriptions of political agendas becoming more diverse (Green-Pedersen, 2007b). Moreover, challenger parties consistently exhibit more narrow issue profiles than do their mainstream counterparts.

Turning to the independent variables, I distinguish between *challenger* and *mainstream* parties based on past experiences in government, following the operationalization by de Vries and Hobolt (2012). Thus, a challenger party is defined as a party that has not previously held political office; a challenger party turns into a mainstream party once it enters a government coalition (see also van de Wardt, de Vries and Hobolt, 2014; van de Wardt, 2015). Furthermore, I distinguish between *mainstream government parties* and *mainstream opposition parties*; the first type has governed in the past and enters the election as an incumbent whereas the latter type did govern in the past but is currently (i.e. the period previous to the election) in opposition. To assess the strength of challenger parties in a given election, I weigh these parties by their vote share in the previous election.<sup>11</sup>

The intra party balance of power between the party leadership and party activists is less straightforward to measure as a result of data availability. Two frequently used data sources that include information on intra party politics are Laver and Hunt's (1992) expert survey and Harmel and Janda's (1996) party change project. The latter project includes only four countries, and thus I rely on data from the Laver and Hunt (1992) expert survey, which covers 25 countries. Specifically, I use the items from the expert survey that tap the power of the party leadership over party policy and the power of party activists over party

<sup>11</sup>Parties draft their manifestos before an elections. Hence, they have to rely on past information when doing so, for example on the electoral strength of challenger parties in the previous election.

policy.<sup>12</sup> Schumacher, de Vries and Vis (2013) as well as Wagner and Meyer (2014) use these two questions to construct their measure of parties' internal distribution of power and Pedersen's (2012) 'intra party democracy' variable is also based on these items. The answers to both questions are scored on a scale ranging from 0 (no influence at all) to 20 (a very great influence).<sup>13</sup> I subtract the score indicating the power of the activists from the score indicating the power of the party leadership. This results in a intra party balance of power scale measuring to what extent the leadership is unconstrained in deciding on the party's policy course. I rescale the index to run from 0 to 30, with higher scores indicating more power for the leadership. The measure is time-invariant, so the assumption is that parties do not change their organizational features dramatically over time. This seems a plausible assumption as parties are conservative organizations that generally resist changing their rules and structures (Harmel and Janda, 1994). Moreover, other aspects of party organization, such as the rules for candidate selection, also exhibit stability over time (Bille, 2001).<sup>14</sup> Kernell (2015, p.1824), surveying party organizations over the past 40 years, concludes that internal party rules remain stable "even as parties are swept in or out of office, undergo significant turnover in leadership, and at times dramatically change their policy positions." Hence, although the measure is a constant, there are good reasons to believe that it is a reasonable proxy for parties' organizational structures.

I control for vote loss as it is likely that parties that have suffered electoral defeat in previous election cycles present broader issue agendas as to make up for those losses and improve their electoral performance. The variable vote loss measures electoral defeat, and is estimated as the differences between vote shares in successive elections; positive differences (denoting electoral gains) are rewritten to 0, indicating that parties did *not* suffer vote losses. Information about vote shares is taken from the Manifesto Project data.

I also add party size (operationalized as a party's vote share at the previous election) as a control variable since larger parties are expected to have a greater issue attention diversity in their manifesto. Large parties have more resources and are, as such, better able to pursue and maintain a broad issue profile, distributing their attention broadly over multiple issues (Wagner and Meyer, 2014).

Further, I control for ideological extremity. Parties that take relatively extreme issue positions have an incentive to emphasize these issues as to strongly publicize their stances and to differentiate themselves from competitors (Rovny, 2012; Wagner, 2012). As such, parties on the fringes of the ideological spectrum are expected to be less diverse in their issue attention; they rather emphasize heavily the few issues on which they take extremist positions. I use Franzmann and Kaiser's (2006) transformation of the MRG-CMP-MARPOR data to infer parties' ideological positions on the general left-right dimension. Debates on how to infer

<sup>12</sup>The exact wording of the questions is: "assess the influence that party leaders have over the formation of party policy" and "assess the influence that party activists have over the formation of party policy".

<sup>13</sup>The correlation between the two scales is  $-.72$

<sup>14</sup>For a similar argument see Schumacher, de Vries and Vis (2013, p.470).

TABLE 4.1 – Operationalization of the Variables

Dependent variables	Indicator	Data source
Issue attention diversity	Transformation of Shannon's H (see equation 4.2)	Own calculation Volkens et al. (2014)
Change in issue attention diversity (IAD)	$ IAD_t - IAD_{t-1} $	Own calculation Volkens et al. (2014)
Independent variables	Indicator	Data source
Challenger party	Never in government before election <sub>t</sub> , otherwise 0	Data on government participation taken from Volkens et al. (2014)
Mainstream party	Has been in government before election <sub>t</sub> , otherwise 0	Data on government participation taken from Volkens et al. (2014)
Mainstream government party	Has been in government before election <sub>t</sub> , and in government in period preceding election <sub>t</sub> , otherwise 0	Data on government participation taken from Volkens et al. (2014)
Mainstream opposition party (office exclusion )	Has been in government before election <sub>t</sub> , and not in government in period preceding election <sub>t</sub> , otherwise 0	Data on government participation taken from Volkens et al. (2014)
Intra party balance of power	Two expert survey questions: (q1) influence party activists over party policy (q2) influence party leaders over party policy $q2 - q1 + \text{lowest value}$	Laver and Hunt (1992)
Control variables	Indicator	Data source
Party size	Vote share election <sub>t-1</sub>	Volkens et al. (2014)
Vote loss	Vote share election <sub>t-1</sub> - Vote share election <sub>t-2</sub> , if negative, otherwise 0	Volkens et al. (2014)
Ideological extremity	Extremity party position on left-right dimension $ party\ position - midpoint\ of\ scale $	Franzmann and Kaiser (2006)

valid left-right estimates from the Manifesto Project data have been documented elsewhere (see for example Budge and Meyer, 2013). Here, it suffices to say that the Franzmann-Kaiser method represents a sophisticated attempt to estimate time- and country-specific positional data, incorporating arguments that the meaning of for example 'left' and 'right' varies across time and space (Benoit and Laver, 2006). The left-right scores, as taken from the data provided by Franzmann and Kaiser (2006), run from 0 to 10. Ideological extremity is then estimated as the absolute difference between a party's position and the midpoint of the scale. The new measure runs accordingly from 0 to 5, with higher scores indicating more extreme left-right positions. Table 4.1 provides an overview of the operationalization of the variables used in this chapter while table 4.2 presents the descriptive statistics.

I treat my data as pooled time-series data with political parties being the cross-sectional units that vary over time (election years). Hence, the estimation technique should deal with the cross-sectional structure of the data as well as with the time-series structure. I use a party-election year set-up and add country dummies to the right hand side of the equation to absorb unobserved differences between countries. Further, given the panel structure of the data, it is likely that problems arise related to panel heteroskedasticity ('groupwise heteroskedasticity') (i.e. variances in error terms differ across parties), serial correlation (i.e. the errors in subsequent election years within parties are dependent) and contemporaneous

TABLE 4.2 – Descriptive Statistics

<i>All parties</i>	<b>n</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Sd</b>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>
Issue attention diversity	1,895	15.457	6.025	1.532	31.234
Vote loss	1,433	1.368	2.491	0.000	18.595
Intra party balance of power	1,408	18.306	5.357	0.000	29.630
Party size <sub>t-1</sub>	1,636	15.808	13.528	0.000	54.373
Ideological extremity	1,527	1.600	1.140	0.002	5.000
<b>Dichotomous variable</b>		<b>%</b>			
Challenger party (cp/mainstream)	1,895	43.06%			
<i>Mainstream Parties</i>	<b>n</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Sd</b>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>
ΔIssue attention diversity	1,040	3.612	3.191	0.000	18.359
Vote loss	985	1.616	2.729	0.000	18.595
Intra party balance of power	926	18.593	4.502	4.080	27.430
Strength challenger parties <sub>t-1</sub>	1,079	13.040	12.525	0.000	63.446
<b>Dichotomous variable</b>		<b>%</b>			
Office exclusion (opp/gov)	1,079	42.08%			

correlation ('cross-sectional dependence') (i.e. the errors of different parties in the same election year are dependent). A Wooldridge test (Wooldridge, 2002; Drukker, 2003) indeed indicates the presence of serial correlation in the data and a modified Wald test (Greene, 2000; Baum, 2001) suggests rejection of the null-hypothesis of no groupwise heteroskedasticity. To deal with the panel heteroskedasticity and possible cross-sectional dependence,<sup>15</sup> I calculate panel-corrected standard errors (PCSEs). To deal with serial correlation, Beck and Katz (1995) recommend adding a lagged dependent variable to the equation. Here, however, I address the AR(1) error structure of the panels by using a Prais-Winsten feasible generalized least squares (FGLS) procedure. Plümper, Troeger and Manow (2005) prefer this option over the inclusion of a lagged dependent variable, as the latter can bias estimates (see also Achen, 2000). I use Fisher-type Phillips-Perron unit root tests (Choi, 2001) to ensure that the dependent and independent variables are stationary.<sup>16</sup>

## 4.4 Results

The hypotheses posit expectations regarding both the level of issue attention diversity as well as changes therein. The first step of the empirical analysis covers models predicting levels of issue attention diversity while in the second step models predicting changes in issue attention diversity are put forward.

In the first step of the analysis I run two main models. The first model includes all parties in order to examine the differences between mainstream parties

<sup>15</sup>The panels in the data are too unbalanced to perform a Pesaran test for contemporaneous correlation (Pesaran, 2004; de Hoyos and Sarafidis, 2006). Nevertheless, the estimation technique addresses this type of autocorrelation.

<sup>16</sup>I resort to the Fisher-type tests since conventional unit root tests (for example the augmented Dickey-Fuller test) are unavailable for unbalanced panel data structures.

and challenger parties. The second model includes mainstream parties only and explores the differences between MOPs and MGPs. These models thus serve to test the first set of hypotheses about the differences between party types in terms of issue attention diversity (H1a and H1b). The models also include the variable capturing the intra party balance of power as to examine the unconditional effect of intra party politics on issue attention diversity (H2a). The core models are specified as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{Issue Attention Diversity}_{i,t} = & \\
 & \beta_0 + \beta_1 [CP_{i,t}] + \beta_2 [Vote\ loss_{i,t}] \\
 & + \beta_3 [Intra\ party\ balance\ of\ power_i] \\
 & + \beta_4 [Party\ size_{i,t}] + \beta_5 [Ideological\ extremity_{i,t}] + \epsilon_{i,t}
 \end{aligned} \tag{4.4}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{Issue Attention Diversity}_{i,t} = & \\
 & \beta_0 + \beta_1 [MGP_{i,t}] + \beta_2 [Vote\ loss_{i,t}] \\
 & + \beta_3 [Intra\ party\ balance\ of\ power_i] \\
 & + \beta_4 [Party\ size_{i,t}] + \beta_5 [Ideological\ extremity_{i,t}] + \epsilon_{i,t}
 \end{aligned} \tag{4.5}$$

where subscript  $i$  denotes parties and  $t$  indicates time (election year). The analysis then proceeds with the inclusion of interaction terms between the party type variables (challenger party and mainstream government party) and the intra party balance of power variable in order to test the conditional hypotheses (H2b and H2c). Table 4.3 reports the results of the regression analyses.

The variables vote loss, party size and ideological extremity are right-skewed and therefore I reestimate models 1-4 with logged transformations of these variables (Gelman and Hill, 2007). These models are reported in table C.1 in appendix C. Since the results do not change substantively, I report the analyses of the original variables here as these are easier to interpret.

Model 1 and model 2 include all parties whereas model 3 and model 4 include mainstream parties only. Model 1 suggest support for the hypothesis that challenger parties' issue agendas are more narrow in scope than the agendas put forward by mainstream parties: the estimated coefficient ( $\beta = -1.15$ ) is negative and statistically significant. The hypothesis that leadership-dominated parties appeal more broadly is not supported by model 1, as the estimated coefficient of the intra party balance of power variable is very small ( $\beta = .0004$ ) and statistically not significant.

Model 2 includes an interaction term between the intra party balance of power variable and the challenger party variable. The inclusion of the interaction term does not alter the effects of the covariates in the model. However, the effect of challenger party status now increases. Model 2 suggests that when the intra party balance of power favours activists (i.e. when the variable denotes a score of zero), the difference between challenger and mainstream parties is about -2.5 in

TABLE 4.3 – Pooled Time Series Regressions of Political Parties' Issue Attention Diversity, 1950-2013

	<b>Model 1</b>	<b>Model 2</b>	<b>Model 3</b> <i>mainstream parties</i>	<b>Model 4</b> <i>mainstream parties</i>
(Constant)	15.9524*** (0.9571)	16.7571*** (1.0724)	15.6132*** (1.0201)	15.7601*** (1.2203)
Challenger Party (CP)	-1.1519*** (0.3024)	-2.5224*** (0.7950)		
Mainstream Government Party (MGP)			0.1775 (0.2157)	-0.3324 (0.9081)
Vote loss	0.0527 (0.0369)	0.0527 (0.0368)	-0.0201 (0.0407)	-0.0176 (0.0409)
Intra party balance of power (IPBP)	0.0004 (0.0204)	-0.0459 (0.0352)	0.0698*** (0.0260)	0.0622 (0.0458)
Party size	0.0250** (0.0113)	0.0255** (0.0113)	-0.0091 (0.0106)	-0.0098 (0.0107)
Ideological extremity	-0.7025*** (0.1077)	-0.6978*** (0.1084)	-0.4346*** (0.1572)	-0.4365*** (0.1590)
CP×Intra party balance of power		0.0777* (0.0426)		
MGP×Intra party balance of power				0.0287 (0.0487)
N	999	999	717	717
Wald	4408.04	3791.80	4954.75	8638.76

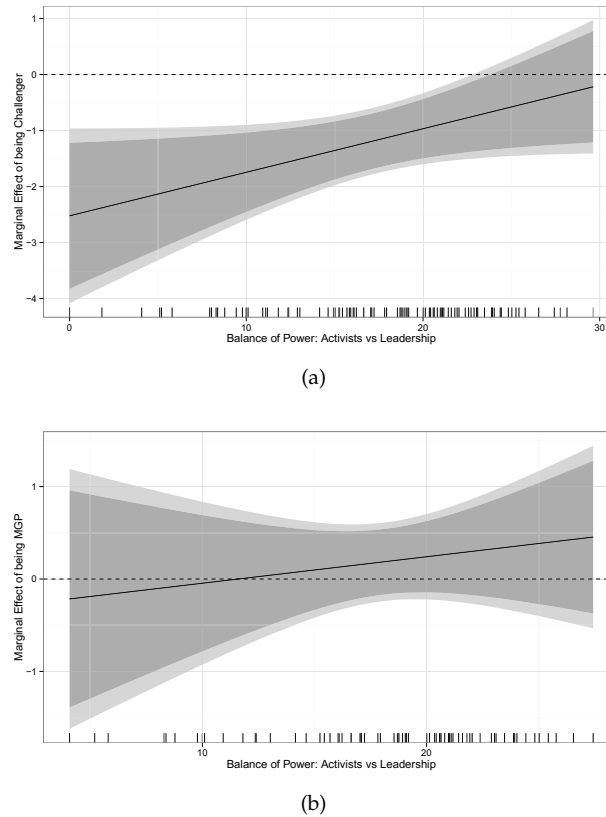
Note: Prais-Winsten regression coefficients with panel-corrected standard errors in parentheses and country dummies (not shown in table). \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$  (two-tailed tests).

issue attention diversity, on average and all else equal. It should be noted that the issue attention diversity variable has a standard deviation (SD) of around 6, and the estimated coefficient thus constitutes an effect of nearly half the SD. In sum, models 1 and 2 offer support for the hypothesis that challenger parties present more confined policy agendas than do mainstream parties.

The positive, and statistically significant, estimated coefficient on the interaction term suggest that when we compare activist-dominated parties to those in which the leadership is more dominant, the difference between challenger and mainstream parties become less pronounced. This is in line with the conditional hypothesis (H2c) explicated above. Figure 4.2(a) depicts the interaction effect for model 2 graphically as to aid its substantive interpretation (Brambor, Clark and Golder, 2006).

Figure 4.2(a) shows the effect of challenger party status on issue attention diversity for different levels of the intra party balance of power variable. When activists constrain party leaders in setting the party's strategic course, there is a negative, and statistically significant effect of challenger status on issue attention diversity. This effect dwindles for higher values of the intra party balance of power. For parties with a score of about 22 or higher on the intra party balance of power variable, indicating strong dominance of leaders, the effect of challenger

FIGURE 4.2 – Marginal Effects of Challenger Party and Mainstream Government Party Status on Issue Attention Diversity across Different Levels of Intra Party Balance of Power



*Note:* The marginal effect plots are constructed using coefficient estimates from table 4.3, model 2 and model 4, respectively. The y-axis depicts the marginal effects of the challenger party variable (a) and the mainstream government party variable (b) on issue attention diversity across different levels of intra party balance of power. The shaded areas reflect 90% and 95% confidence intervals. The tick marks on the x-axis indicate individual observations for the intra party balance of power variable.

party status is no longer statistically significant. Hence, if leaders are dominant, challenger status has no longer an impact on issue attention diversity, in line with hypothesis 2c. It should be noted that the balance of power variable varies within the category of challenger parties as well as across mainstream parties. For mainstream parties, the average value is 18.59 (SD: 4.50), for challengers this is 17.75 (SD: 6.67).

To give an example, the Swedish Green Party (MP) has a leadership dominance score of 8.29, indicating that it is an activist-centred party. Its average issue attention diversity score between 1988 and 1998, when it was a challenger party, was 5.97. The Swedish Left Party (V) is like many former communist parties much more leadership-centred (with a score of the leadership dominance variable of 16.05). The party, also a challenger party in the same 10-year period, presented issue agendas with an average diversity score of 10.38.



Evaluating the control variables, model 1 and 2 denote positive and significant, albeit small, estimated coefficients for party size ( $\beta = .03$ ), indicating that larger parties are somewhat more likely to present broad agendas. An increase in party size of 1 SD is associated with an increase in issue attention diversity of about 2.6. Moreover, ideological extremity seems to be negatively related to agenda scope ( $\beta = -.7$ ): for each 1-point deviation from the center of the ideological 0-10 left-right scale, parties decrease the scope of their agenda with .70, on average and all else equal.

Models 3 and 4, which include mainstream parties only, find no support for the notion that mainstream parties in government present broader agendas than mainstream parties in opposition, in contrast to hypothesis 1a. The estimated coefficients for the mainstream government party variable ( $\beta = .18$  &  $\beta = -.33$ ) are indistinguishable from zero. Experience in government indeed impacts parties' issue diversity strategies. However, the crucial difference seems not be between government and opposition parties, but rather between those parties that regularly participate in coalition governments (mainstream parties) and those that have never been rewarded with access to office (challenger parties).

Model 3, further, suggest some degree of support for the hypothesis that leaders, when unconstrained, direct their parties towards broader issue profiles (H2a): the estimated coefficient is positive and statistically significant, but rather small ( $\beta = .07$ ). Comparing mainstream parties in which activists are most powerful (with a value of 4.1 on the intra party balance of power scale) to leadership-dominated mainstream parties (with a value of 27.4 on the intra party balance of power scale), the model predicts an average difference of 1.6 in issue attention diversity. However, the estimated coefficient fails to reach statistical significance in model 4.

In model 4, an interaction term between the mainstream government party variable and the intra party balance of power is introduced. The interaction term is positive ( $\beta = .03$ ) which suggests that the difference between mainstream parties in government and in opposition becomes more pronounced as leaders have more of a say. However, the interaction term is not statistically significant. Figure 4.2 (b) displays the marginal effects plot. It shows the effect of MGP status on issue attention diversity for different levels of the intra party balance of power variable. Contrary to hypothesis 2b, no conditioning effect of intra party politics is found. The differences between mainstream parties in and out of government remain statistically insignificant across the intra party balance of power scale.

Taken together, models 3 and 4 provide no support for the expectation that MGPs and MOPs present agendas that differ in scope. Model 3 does offer some support for an unconditional effect of intra party politics on issue attention diversity.

With regard to the control variables in models 3 and 4, the negative effect of ideological extremity ( $\beta = -.43$ ;  $\beta = -.44$ ) indicates that mainstream parties that are relatively extreme in terms of left-right positioning put forward more confined issues agendas. The effect is smaller compared to models 1 and 2, which included

all parties, but statistically significant. The analysis thus provides support for the notion that moderate parties appeal broadly while more extreme parties confine their issue appeals. The insignificant effects of the vote loss variable across all models suggests no support for the argument that parties that had a bad showing at the polls broaden their issue appeals. Party size does no longer denote a statistically significant effect in models 3 and 4: differences in size across mainstream parties do not seem to impact the scope of their agendas.

Turning now to the second step of the analysis, I estimate a series of models predicting absolute changes in mainstream parties' issue attention diversity, as to evaluate hypotheses 3a – 3d. The models are specified as follows:

$$|\Delta \text{Issue Attention Diversity}_{i,t}| = \beta_0 + \beta_1 [\text{Office exclusion}_{i,t}] + \beta_2 [\text{Vote loss}_{i,t}] + \beta_3 [\text{Strength challengers}_{i,t}] + \beta_4 [\text{IPBP}_i] + \epsilon_{i,t} \quad (4.6)$$

$$|\Delta \text{Issue Attention Diversity}_{i,t}| = \beta_0 + \beta_1 [\text{Office exclusion}_{i,t}] + \beta_2 [\text{Vote loss}_{i,t}] + \beta_3 [\text{Strength challengers}_{i,t}] + \beta_4 [\text{IPBP}_i] + \beta_5 [\text{IPBP}_i \times \text{Office exclusion}_{i,t}] + \epsilon_{i,t} \quad (4.7)$$

$$|\Delta \text{Issue Attention Diversity}_{i,t}| = \beta_0 + \beta_1 [\text{Office exclusion}_{i,t}] + \beta_2 [\text{Vote loss}_{i,t}] + \beta_3 [\text{Strength challengers}_{i,t}] + \beta_4 [\text{IPBP}_i] + \beta_5 [\text{IPBP}_i \times \text{Vote loss}_{i,t}] + \epsilon_{i,t} \quad (4.8)$$

$$|\Delta \text{Issue Attention Diversity}_{i,t}| = \beta_0 + \beta_1 [\text{Office exclusion}_{i,t}] + \beta_2 [\text{Vote loss}_{i,t}] + \beta_3 [\text{Strength challengers}_{i,t}] + \beta_4 [\text{IPBP}_i] + \beta_5 [\text{IPBP}_i \times \text{Strength challengers}_{i,t}] + \epsilon_{i,t} \quad (4.9)$$

The first model serves to test the expectation that external 'shocks' in the form of office exclusion, vote loss and increasing electoral support for challenger parties have an impact on changes in mainstream parties' issue attention diversity. I then add interaction terms between the intra party balance of power (IPBP) variable and, respectively, the variables indicating office exclusion, vote loss and the strength of challenger parties. This allows for testing the conditional hypotheses that parties in which the leadership is dominant respond more strongly to these events by changing the scope of their agenda than do parties in which activists are powerful.

TABLE 4.4 – Pooled Time Series Regressions of Absolute Changes in Mainstream Parties' Issue Attention Diversity, 1950-2013

	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8
(Constant)	4.7224*** (0.5475)	5.1130*** (0.5118)	4.9215*** (0.5565)	4.3785*** (0.5733)
Office exclusion	0.1836* (0.1007)	−0.6085*** (0.0609)	0.2082** (0.1018)	0.2330** (0.0961)
Vote loss	−0.0556*** (0.0201)	−0.0379*** (0.0112)	−0.1135** (0.0499)	−0.0520*** (0.0190)
Strength challengers	−0.0076 (0.0066)	−0.0111* (0.0057)	−0.0074 (0.0066)	0.0272 (0.0197)
Intra party balance of power (IPBP)	−0.0322* (0.0172)	−0.0536*** (0.0132)	−0.0442** (0.0181)	−0.0145 (0.0191)
IPBP×Office exclusion		0.0424*** (0.0061)		
IPBP×Vote loss			0.0034 (0.0026)	
IPBP×Strength challengers				−0.0020* (0.0011)
N	864	864	864	864
Wald	219.64	1762.52	225.77	405.78

Note: Prais-Winsten regression coefficients with panel-corrected standard errors in parentheses and country dummies (not shown in table). \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$  (two-tailed tests).

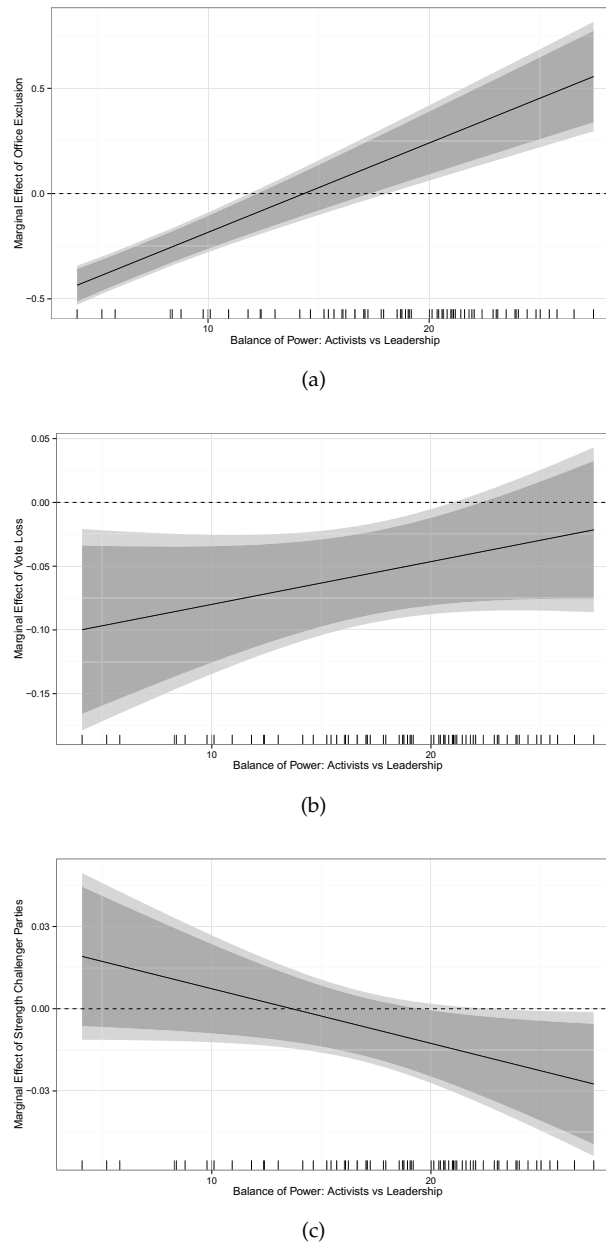
Table 4.4 displays the results of the regression analyses. Because of the skewness of several variables, I reestimate models 5-8 using log transformations (see table C.2 in appendix C).

Model 5 reports the results of the model without interaction terms. In model 6, 7 and 8, the interaction terms are introduced. The interactions between the intra party balance of power variable and, respectively, office exclusion (model 6) and the electoral strength of challenger parties (model 8) denote statistically significant coefficient estimates ( $\beta = .04$ ,  $\beta = -.002$ ). The interaction term including the vote loss variable (model 7) is not statistically significant ( $\beta = .003$ ). Figure 4.3 depicts these marginal effects graphically.

Figure 4.3(a) shows the marginal effect of office exclusion on absolute changes in issue attention diversity across different levels of the intra party balance of power variable. Mainstream parties in which activists are powerful do not respond to the 'shock' of office exclusion, as the estimated effect is negative. If leaders are more powerful, however, office exclusion seems to have a positive impact on absolute changes in mainstream parties' agenda scope. If the balance of power variable exceeds the value of 18, the effect of office exclusion on issue attention diversity turns positive. Although small, the effect is statistically significant, suggesting support for hypothesis 4b.

I also hypothesized that vote loss would make mainstream parties change agenda scope, especially when the leadership is unconstrained in deciding on the strategic course of the party. Figure 4.3(b) offers tentative support for this

FIGURE 4.3 – Marginal Effects of Vote Loss, Office Exclusion and the Strength of Challenger Parties on Mainstream Parties' Issue Attention Diversity across Different Levels of Intra Party Balance of Power



*Note:* The marginal effects plots (a), (b) and (c) are constructed using coefficient estimates from table 2, models 6,7 and 8, respectively. The y-axis depicts the marginal effect of office exclusion (a), vote loss (b) and the strength of challenger parties (c) on changes in mainstream party issue attention diversity across different levels of intra party balance of power. The shaded areas reflect 90% and 95% confidence intervals. The tick marks on the x-axis indicate individual observations for the intra party balance of power variable for mainstream parties.

expectation. It shows the marginal effect of vote loss on issue attention diversity across the balance of power measure. If activists are powerful, vote loss has a negative effect on absolute changes in agenda scope. If leaders dominate, vote loss seems not to have a significant impact. Still, the variation in the impact of vote loss across activist-oriented parties (a negative and statistically significant effect) and leadership-oriented parties (no statistically significant effect) offers some degree of support for the hypothesis that vote loss influences mainstream parties' shifts in issue attention diversity conditional upon their intra party balance of power.

Model 8 explores the impact of the strength of challenger parties on mainstream parties' issue agenda scope (hypothesis 5), with the interaction depicted by figure 4.3(c). Contrasting hypothesis 3d, the coefficient on the interaction term is negative, which would indicate that parties are less inclined to change agenda scope in response to increasing electoral strength of challengers when leaders become more powerful. However, as figure 4.3(c) shows, the effect is not statistically significant.

Taken together, the analysis supports the core expectations of this chapter regarding the difference between challenger and mainstream parties and the conditional impact of intra-party politics. Government experience impacts the scope of issue agendas; the crucial difference is, however, not between parties currently in and out of office, as is suggested by other studies (Green-Pedersen and Mortensen, 2010; Greene, 2015). The evidence presented here seems to suggest that mainstream government parties and mainstream opposition parties present issue agendas similar in scope whereas challenger parties appeal more narrowly. Moreover, intra party politics is suggested to have a conditioning effect: challenger parties in which leaders dominate are *not* more confined in their issue appeals than mainstream parties. Mainstream parties present, in general, broad agendas but introduce changes after negative shocks, most notably vote loss and office exclusion; the extent to which these 'shocks' affect changes in agenda scope is however conditional upon the internal balance of power.

## 4.5 Discussion

I have argued that parties' issue attention diversity, that is: how narrowly or how broadly parties distribute attention across policy issues, is influenced by their experience with government participation and by the internal balance of power between the party leadership and the activist base. The findings have several implications for the study of issue competition and issue diversity, as well as for the study of party behaviour more generally.

First, the findings suggest that the distinction between challenger and mainstream parties matters when it comes to differences in issue diversity across parties. Previous work mainly focuses on the distinction between government and opposition parties (Greene, 2015). This chapter goes beyond this dichotomy and applies the mainstream-challenger logic. This latter typology more adequately

captures the competitive structure in multiparty systems and incorporates the notion that some parties regularly switch between government and opposition status whereas other parties have never governed. Mainstream opposition parties as well as mainstream government parties, it is argued here, seek to reinforce existing patterns of competition and present issue agendas that are similar in scope. Challengers, on the other hand, devise their issue strategies as to upset the political status quo and present confined agendas. As such, this chapter contributes to the literature by applying insights from previous work on mainstream and challenger parties (de Vries and Hobolt, 2012; van de Wardt, de Vries and Hobolt, 2014; van de Wardt, 2015) and connecting it to the emerging literature on issue diversity (Greene, 2015; Somer-Topcu, 2015).

Second, the results make a specific contribution to the literature on issue entrepreneurship in multiparty competition. Most studies examine the extent to which challenger parties pursue issue entrepreneurial strategies by emphasizing European integration issues in an attempt to increase the dimensionality of the political issue space (de Vries and Hobolt, 2012; Hobolt and de Vries, 2015; Meijers, 2015; van de Wardt, de Vries and Hobolt, 2014). This chapter adds the insight that non-governing challengers respond to their unfavourable political position by campaigning on a confined issue agenda, narrowing down their attention to a few issues. However, the extent to which challengers present narrow issue appeals depends, as the indicative findings presented above suggest, on internal party organizational structures. As such, this chapter relates to a literature that considers party organization to be an important conditional variable when it comes to parties' issue strategies in election campaigns (Schumacher, de Vries and Vis, 2013; Wagner and Meyer, 2014). Most studies consider the diverging preferences of leaders and activists regarding party positioning. This chapter contributes to this literature by highlighting that party leaders and activists also have different preferences regarding the scope of parties' issue appeals.

Moreover, this chapter contributes to our understanding of patterns of issue diversification. Most research has focused on parties' tendencies to become evermore 'catch-all' by diversifying their issue appeals (Kirchheimer, 1966; Somer-Topcu, 2015). As a result, aggregated policy agendas in modern democracies have become more diverse (Green-Pedersen, 2007b). This chapter does not only examine differences in levels of issue attention diversity but also considers *changes* therein. As such, it acknowledges that sometimes it is rational for parties to decrease the scope of their agenda and confine their issue appeals (Green, 2011). This should inform our understanding of the *dynamics* of issue diversity in election campaigns.

Finally, the results presented in this chapter relate to the ongoing debate on how mainstream parties respond to the electoral success of challenger parties (Abou-Chadi, 2014; van de Wardt, 2015; Spoon, Hobolt and de Vries, 2014). The results presented here suggest that mainstream parties do not change the scope of their agenda when confronted with increasingly strong challengers. This implies that the political mainstream does not "accommodate" (Meguid, 2005) challengers

by diversifying its agenda, but, for example, by dropping issues and replacing them with the issues as put forward by challengers. The net result, then, being stability in issue attention diversity. As such, the issue attention diversity perspective opens up new avenues for research on the impact of challenger parties on patterns of party competition and on the politicization of new issues in advanced democracies.

---

## Adaptation or Dismissal?

### The Impact of Green, Far Right and Eurosceptic Issue Entrepreneurs on the Agendas of Other Parties

---

---

*\*Earlier versions of this chapter were presented at the Comparative Politics Colloquium of the Humboldt University Berlin (2015, Berlin); at the Work in Progress Workshop of the Berlin Graduate School of Social Sciences at the Humboldt University Berlin (2015, Berlin) and at the 74<sup>th</sup> annual conference of the Midwest Political Science Association (2016, Chicago). I thank Zachary Greene, Gijs Schumacher, Alina Vranceanu, Matthias Orlowski, Tarik Abou-Chadi, Saara Inkinen, Philippe Joly and Sybille Luhmann for their constructive feedback.*



“ The central political fact in a free society is the tremendous contagiousness of conflict. ”

---

Elmer E. Schattschneider, *The Semisovereign People. A Realist's View of Democracy in America*, 1960 (p.2)

## 5.1 Introduction

**D**OMINANT APPROACHES TO THE study of political competition tend to focus on *responsiveness*, as ‘political markets’ are usually considered to function properly when the promises and actions of political elites match the preferences of the citizenry. As such, studies assess whether demand- and supply-side preferences are ‘ideologically congruent’ (Dalton, 2015) and examine to what extent elites ‘dynamically adapt’ to changes in political demand (Stimson, Mackuen and Erikson, 1995). However, *innovation*, although somewhat overlooked in theoretical and empirical accounts, is equally important for healthy (political) markets (Franzmann, 2011).

But how do innovations in political issue markets occur? Traditional theories of issue evolution (Carmines and Stimson, 1986), issue manipulation and heresethetics (Riker, 1982, 1986, 1993a) have focused on the initiators of change, as they posit that politicians in disadvantageous positions seek to change the terms of competition by introducing new issues. Building on these theories, studies show how political losers in multiparty systems engage in ‘issue entrepreneurial’ strategies by mobilizing previously ignored issues (Hobolt and de Vries, 2015) or issues that drive a wedge in governing coalitions (van de Wardt, de Vries and Hobolt, 2014).

Identifying issue entrepreneurs is, however, only one side of the story; the other being the response of their competitors. After all, a successful innovation, i.e. whether a new issue becomes politicized and comes to feature prominently on the ‘party system agenda’ (Green-Pedersen and Mortensen, 2010), crucially depends on whether other parties adapt to the new agenda or rather ignore it. As such, a literature has emerged investigating whether parties ‘accommodate’ or ‘dismiss’ (Meguid, 2005) the promoted issues of issue entrepreneurs.

This chapter aims to contribute to our understanding of the impact of issue entrepreneurs on other parties’ issue agendas by examining the consequences of electoral support for green, far right and Eurosceptic parties on the evolution of

green, immigration and European Union (EU) issues in western European party systems. Previous studies have identified a contagious effect of the far right (van Spanje, 2010; Abou-Chadi, 2014; Han, 2015) but dispute the impact of green parties (Spoon, Hobolt and de Vries, 2014; Abou-Chadi, 2014). Moreover, studies on the consequences of Eurosceptic party support have been limited to specific countries (van de Wardt, 2015) or have conceptualized contagion effects solely in terms of positional shifts (Meijers, 2015). Here, the focus is on *salience* effects: do parties adapt and shift attention to the issues brought forward by issue entrepreneurs, or do they try to keep these issues off the agenda by downplaying their importance? This is an important question as political agendas have become increasingly diverse and the competition between parties over which issues should dominate the agenda has become more prominent (Green-Pedersen, 2007b).

Relying on data from both the Manifesto Project and the Chapel Hill expert surveys, this chapter demonstrates how contagion effects vary across different types of issue entrepreneurial strategies. First, it presents findings corroborating previous work which argued that green and far right challengers have diverging impacts on the salience strategies of other parties. Far right parties pressure other parties in picking up their promoted issues while support for green parties leads to de-emphasizing effects (cf. Abou-Chadi, 2014).

Second, this chapter maintains that Eurosceptic party support poses a different challenge to parties than does the electoral success of green and far right challengers. These latter parties predominantly mobilize on the basis of environmental and immigration issues and regard them as highly important. By contrast, Eurosceptic parties do *not* uniformly regard EU issues as being exceptionally important to their party. As a result, their impact on the issue salience strategies of other parties is conditioned by the salience they themselves attach to the EU issue: if Eurosceptic parties regard EU issues to be important, a contagion effect is observed.

As such, this chapter underlines that issue entrepreneurial strategies consist of two aspects: (1) the issue entrepreneur should take a position that deviates from the status quo, and (2) the issue entrepreneur should strongly publicize this position to the electorate (Carmines and Stimson, 1986; de Vries and Hobolt, 2012). Only when these two conditions are met, this chapter argues, will electoral support for Eurosceptic parties have a contagious effect on the salience strategies of other parties. This argument builds on recent studies that find Eurosceptic party support only capable of influencing other parties' policy *positions* on European integration when the Eurosceptic challenger regards EU issues to be important (cf. Meijers, 2015). This chapter extends this conditional logic and finds it to hold for *salience* effects as well. Since green and far right parties uniformly regard 'their' issues as very important to the party, a conditional effect is in their cases not observed. These results have important implications for our understanding of patterns of issue evolution in European multiparty systems.

This chapter unfolds as follows. First, theories of issue evolution and issue

entrepreneurship are briefly discussed and it is highlighted why EU, environmental and immigration issues are the focus of the analysis. Second, the literature on party competition is examined as to derive hypotheses of the strategies parties choose when confronted with issue entrepreneurs. Data, operationalization and the empirical approach are subsequently introduced. After discussing the results, the chapter closes with discussing its implications.

## 5.2 Issue Entrepreneurial Strategies

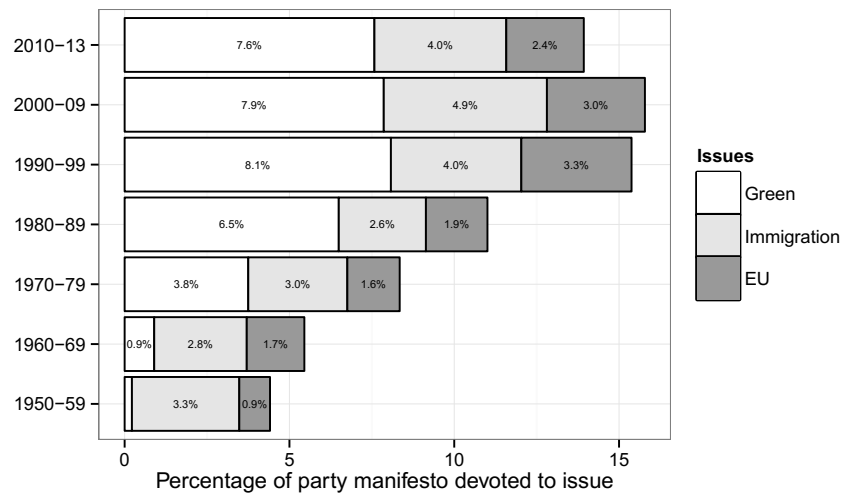
In classical theories of ‘issue evolution’ (Carmines and Stimson, 1986, 1989), political elites occupying losing positions on the extant dimension of conflict play a crucial role. They have an incentive to change the status quo of politics and shift attention to new issue dimensions, seeking “some alternative that beats the current winner” (Riker, 1982, p.209). The ultimate goal of the political loser is to create mass realignment, but for this to succeed two conditions must be met: positional differences between parties on the new issue must be visible to voters and voters should, in fact, care about these differences. As Carmines and Stimson (1986, p.903) phrase it; the new issue dimension should entail “clarified mass cognitive images of the parties and then polarized affection toward them.”

The issue evolution model has been applied to describe the dynamics of racial- (Carmines and Stimson, 1986, 1989), abortion- (Adams, 1997) and ‘culture war’ issues (Lindaman and Haider-Markel, 2002) which have, indeed, come to define the party system in the United States and led to mass realignment. In a bit more modest fashion, de Vries and Hobolt (2012) (see also Hobolt and de Vries, 2015) have applied these insights to their theory of issue entrepreneurship in multiparty systems, which involves the mobilization of a new issue dimension by parties through addressing previously non-salient issue dimensions or by adopting a deviant position on an already existing issue dimension (de Vries and Hobolt, 2012, p.250).

This chapter focuses on the European integration, environmental and immigration issue areas. Figure 5.1 depicts the rising importance of these issues to parties. In the 1950s, these three issue areas combined made up less than 5 per cent of an average election program. By 1990, the average attention to EU, green and immigration issues in party programs had risen to over 15 per cent.

Why focus on these three issues? Previous work has outlined European integration as a case ‘par excellence’ to study the dynamics of issue entrepreneurial strategies. Although most western European countries have been subject to similar integration pressures, politicization patterns of the issue in domestic political systems exhibit remarkable variation (Kriesi et al., 2006; de Vries, 2007). Generally speaking, though, mainstream parties have shied away from addressing the issue (van der Eijk and Franklin, 2004; Green-Pedersen, 2012); perhaps because it does not fit the traditional left-right dimension (Kriesi et al., 2006; Hooghe, Marks and Wilson, 2002) or because mainstream party voters are divided over questions on European integration (van de Wardt, 2014b). As a result, politicization at the

FIGURE 5.1 – Attention to European integration, Environmental and Immigration Issues in Party Manifestos, 1950-2013



*Note:* Based on data from the Manifesto Project (MRG-CMP-MARPOR). For the operationalization of the EU, green and immigration issue dimensions, see section 5.4.

party level has been mainly driven by Eurosceptical fringe parties (de Vries and Edwards, 2009; Hooghe, Marks and Wilson, 2002) as European voters are responsive to their issue entrepreneurial strategies (de Vries and Hobolt, 2012; Hobolt and de Vries, 2015).

The patterns of the evolution of immigration and environmental issues in European party systems are, to a certain extent, similar. Immigration issues have always been of ideological concern for mainstream right parties (Bale, 2008) and have been politicized, in some cases, before the electoral rise of the far right (Alonso and Fonseca, 2011). At the same time, however, immigration issues have been proven to be internally divisive and, hence, risky to address for mainstream parties (van Kersbergen and Krouwel, 2008; Dahlström and Esaiasson, 2011; Bale, 2008). Across Europe, far right parties have successfully mobilized voters, primarily, but not solely, on the basis of their stances on the immigration issue dimension (Mudde, 2007; Norris, 2005; Meguid, 2005). Finally, green parties have succeeded to reach out to 'left-libertarian' constituencies (Kitschelt, 1988), predominantly by emphasizing environmental issues, on which they are now widely regarded as 'issue owners' (Spoon, Hobolt and de Vries, 2014; Abou-Chadi, 2014).

In order to fully understand innovations in political issue markets, however, the identification of issue entrepreneurial strategies is only the first step. Crucial for processes of politicization is the strategic response of other parties in the system. Do they adapt to the new agenda; i.e. engage in competition with the issue entrepreneur on the new issue dimension, or do they dismiss it, aiming to keep the issue off the agenda? Green-Pedersen (2012) has argued, in this context, how the relative absence of competition on EU issues in the Danish party system should

be understood in light of the incentives for (de)politicization the issue offers for mainstream parties. In the following, therefore, this chapter theorizes on parties' issue strategies when confronted with issue entrepreneurs.

### 5.3 Issue Entrepreneurs & their Impact on Rival Parties

How do parties respond to the issue entrepreneurial strategies of Eurosceptic, far right and green parties? Considering spatial conceptions of electoral competition (Downs, 1957), parties should re-position themselves following the electoral success of issue entrepreneurs. Indeed, studies have found that parties shift towards more restrictive positions on immigration issues in response to increasing far right support (van Spanje, 2010; Abou-Chadi, 2014; Han, 2015) and towards more Eurosceptic positions when pressured by Eurosceptic party support (Meijers, 2015).

From an issue salience perspective, parties' strategic options are more complex. On the one hand, parties benefit from selectively emphasizing issues that are beneficial to them (Budge and Farlie, 1983; Robertson, 1976; Dolezal et al., 2014), for example because the electorate perceives them to be competent on the issue (Petrocik, 1996). As such, when confronted with a successful issue entrepreneur, parties might be tempted to drop the issue from the agenda, consistent with Riker's dominance principle, which holds that politicians have a strategic incentive to cease from discussing an issue when 'the other side' dominates it (Riker, 1993a, p.81). By keeping the issue off the agenda, parties signal to voters that it is not important. In the long run, such dismissive strategies can erode electoral support for the issue entrepreneur (Meguid, 2005; Dahlström and Esaiasson, 2011). Bale et al. (2010, p.413) refer to this as a strategy of *defusing* new issues, as parties seek to decrease the relevance of the issue in an attempt to "'heresthetically' [...] reset the political agenda."

On the other hand, parties cannot always simply ignore issues they would not like to see discussed. Although salience theories predict politicians to talk past each other in election campaigns (Riker, 1993a), empirical studies have exposed significant overlap in the issues parties address (Sigelman and Buell, 2004; Damore, 2004, 2005; Green-Pedersen, 2007b). Apparently, there is a strong 'common agenda' component to parties' issue profiles (Green-Pedersen and Mortensen, 2010) (see also Chapter 3). Pressured by increasing support for issue entrepreneurs, parties might feel compelled to pick up their promoted issues.

Taking into account the electoral risks and opportunities associated with strategies of accommodation and dismissal, parties face a delicate trade-off when confronted with successful issue entrepreneurs. An accommodative strategy is likely to legitimize the promoted issue of the issue entrepreneur in the eyes of the voters (Bale, 2003; Arzheimer and Carter, 2006) and establish the issue prominently on the 'party system agenda' (Green-Pedersen and Mortensen, 2010). As such, it might cause voter movements towards the issue entrepreneur (Meguid, 2005).

However, parties might also benefit from further politicization of the promoted issues of the issue entrepreneur. Accommodating the far right's immigration appeals by centre-right parties is often understood as a deliberate strategy to reach out to left-authoritarian voters (cf. Abou-Chadi, 2014). These voters make up a substantial share of European electorates (van der Brug and van Spanje, 2009) and are tempted to desert centre-left parties when immigration issues are primed (Lefkofridi, Wagner and Willmann, 2014). Even if these voters turn to support the far right, the 'right bloc' profits and finds itself in a situation to form right-wing governments (Bale, 2003). As such, an accommodative strategy in this case might undermine electoral support for one established party (the centre left) and create an advantageous situation for another (the centre right), even if voters turn to the issue entrepreneur (the far right).

As Abou-Chadi (2014) has convincingly argued, parties take into account the type of issue and the type of issue entrepreneur when calculating the expected benefits and costs that are likely to result from the politicization of an issue. Environmental issues have a high valence component (Stokes, 1963) and green parties clearly 'own' the issue (Spoon, Hobolt and de Vries, 2014; Abou-Chadi, 2014). By contrast, immigration issues have a higher positional component to them and far right parties are not issue owners. Moreover, the environment, as an issue, is easily integrated into the dominant left-right dimension (Kriesi et al., 2006) and, thus, does not offer the same cross-cutting electoral opportunities as do immigration issues. Taking this into account, the risk of partisan realignment towards the issue entrepreneur is much higher when green issues are concerned, and much lower when it comes to immigration issues. As a result, Abou-Chadi (2014) argues, parties will dismiss green parties' agendas but increase the salience of immigration issues when confronted with far right challengers.

Building on this logic and taking into account the type of issue and the type of issue entrepreneur, I argue that it is likely that increasing Eurosceptic party support pressures other parties in taking up EU issues. First, European integration is a clear example of a positional issue, with both political elites and voters taking pro-EU and anti-EU stances, ensuring great potential for contestation in domestic politics (van der Eijk and Franklin, 2004; de Vries, 2007; Taggart and Szczesniak, 2008). Second, Eurosceptical parties do not enjoy ownership on EU issues; if anything, centre-right parties dominate the issue (Seeberg, 2014, p.22-23). Third, EU issues are orthogonal to the left-right dimension (Kriesi et al., 2006; Hooghe, Marks and Wilson, 2002) and can be approached in both cultural and economic frames (Kitschelt, 2007, p.543). This opens up possibilities for cross-cutting electoral appeals; right of centre parties, for example, can exploit Euroscepticism to appeal to the support base of the far right (Werts, Scheepers and Lubbers, 2012). Finally, partisan elites have, over the last decades, shifted towards more Eurosceptic positions pressured by, indeed, Eurosceptic party support (Meijers, 2015). It is unlikely that these positional shifts are not accompanied by corresponding shifts in issue salience, as parties need to explain and defend their new position (cf.

Meguid, 2005). Hence, I expect parties to shift salience to EU issues in response to increasing support for Eurosceptic parties.

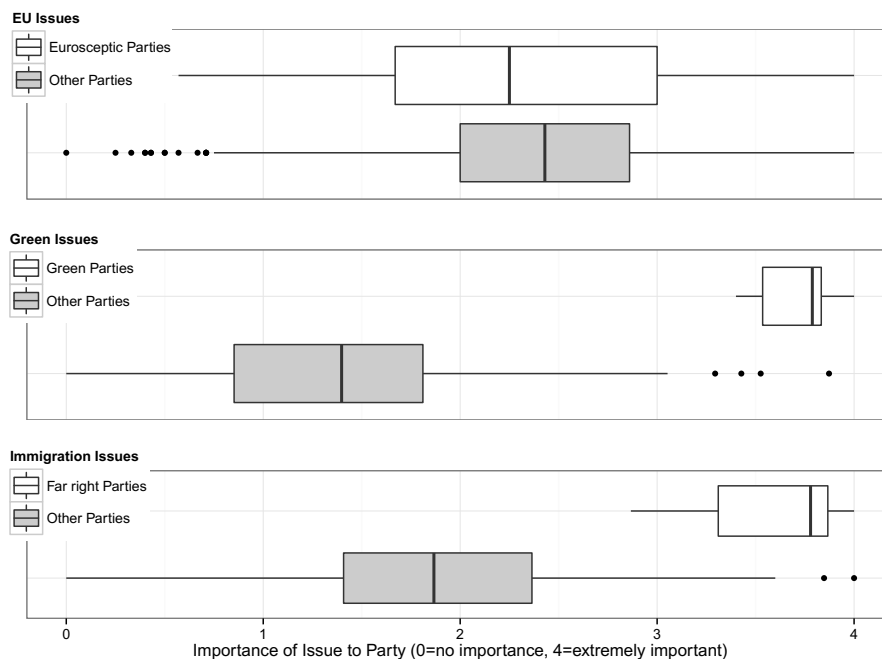
In sum, the discussion above leads to different expectations on how parties adjust their issue salience strategies when confronted with different types of issue entrepreneurial strategies. I summarize these in the following hypothesis:

**H<sub>1</sub>: Salience Contagion Hypothesis:**

Parties increase their emphasis on EU and immigration issues when confronted with increasing electoral support for Eurosceptic and far right parties, and decrease emphasis on green issues when confronted with increasing electoral support for green parties

In addition, I argue that the impact of Eurosceptic party support on the agendas of other parties is conditional, depending upon the importance the challengers themselves attach to EU issues. As highlighted above, parties pursue issue entrepreneurial strategies by taking a deviant position on an issue dimension and by strongly publicizing this position to the electorate. The second point is where Eurosceptic parties differ from green and far right parties. These latter parties regard ‘their’ issues as highly important. By contrast, Eurosceptic parties do not perceive EU issues to be unequivocally important to their party. Figure 5.2 serves to illustrate this difference.

FIGURE 5.2 – Importance of EU, Green and Immigration Issues to Parties



*Note:* Based on data from several CHES rounds. The question on EU issues was available for 1984-2010, the green issue item was only asked in the 2010 round and the immigration question was available for 2006 and 2010. For the classification of Eurosceptic, green and far right parties, see table 5.1.

Using data from the Chapel Hill Expert Surveys (CHES) (Bakker et al., 2015), figure 5.2 shows how green and far right parties consider environmental and immigration issues as particularly important to their party. Parties that take Eurosceptic positions, however, are more divided; some parties perceive European integration to be of great significance, others as hardly of any importance. In fact, figure 5.2 depicts no considerable differences between Eurosceptic parties and all other parties when it comes to the salience of EU issues. This should not come as a surprise since parties that oppose the EU form a rather heterogeneous group, including peripheral parties on the far left and far right (Taggart, 1998; Hooghe, Marks and Wilson, 2002; de Vries and Edwards, 2009) and single-issue parties that were, at least initially, formed solely to mobilize opposition to the EU (e.g. the UK Independence Party; see Usherwood (2008)).

If Eurosceptic parties do not regard EU issues as important, it is unlikely that their electoral success will pressure other parties in adapting to their agenda (cf. Meijers, 2015). Indeed, the salience Eurosceptic parties attach to EU issues determines the degree to which they actually pursue issue entrepreneurial strategies and, in turn, conditions the impact they have on the agendas on other parties. In a similar vein, de Vries (2007) has argued that EU issue voting in national elections is only likely to occur when partisan conflicts over European integration is accompanied by increasing salience of the issue. I formalize this conditional expectation in the following hypothesis:

**H<sub>2</sub>:** *Conditional EU Salience Hypothesis:*

Parties increase the salience of EU issues in response to Eurosceptic party support only if Eurosceptic parties regard EU issues as important

## 5.4 Data & Operationalization

To test the hypotheses explicated above, I run three models predicting party emphasis on environmental, immigration and EU issues. I employ data from both the Manifesto Project (MRG-CMP-MARPOR) (Budge et al., 2001; Klingemann et al., 2006; Volkens et al., 2014) and from several rounds of the Chapel Hill Expert Surveys (CHES). Specifically, I use the 1999-2010 CHES trendfile (Bakker et al., 2015) and combine it with the Ray dataset which covers the years 1984-1996 (Ray, 1999).<sup>1</sup>

For the models predicting party emphasis on environmental and immigration issues, I rely on the MGRG-CMP-MARPOR data. The dataset includes information on almost all parties that are classified in this chapter as green and far right parties and has been used in other studies on the contagion effects of green and far right parties (Spoon, Hobolt and de Vries, 2014; Abou-Chadi, 2014; Han, 2015). Unfortunately, most of the parties that are classified as Eurosceptic parties are not included in the MRG-CMP-MARPOR dataset (cf. Meijers, 2015, p.4). Therefore,

<sup>1</sup>The combined Ray-CHES dataset includes information on the following years: 1984, 1988, 1992, 1996, 1999, 2002, 2006 and 2010.



for information on party issue emphasis on EU issues, I rely on the Ray-CHES data.<sup>2</sup>

Both datasets do not come without criticism. Several methodological debates are associated with the MRG-CMP-MARPOR data, but for the large part these have to do with inferring party policy positions from the data (Gemenis, 2013). Here, I am only interested in issue salience strategies. The data allows for such measurement as quasi-sentences in party manifestos are coded by hand and categorized into one of the 56 issue categories, enabling researchers to infer the relative importance of issues to parties. Expert surveys are sometimes criticized for measuring party reputations on issues instead of actual positions. Moreover, it is not always clear on which exact criteria experts evaluate parties (Budge, 2000). However, Steenbergen and Marks (2007) have addressed these issues and point out, for example, that cross-expert variation is limited. In addition, the reliability of the CHES data has also been demonstrated elsewhere (Hooghe et al., 2010).

### 5.4.1 Dependent Variables

The dependent variables in this chapter are party emphases on environmental, immigration and EU issues. To measure environmental issue emphasis, I use the items from the MRG-CMP-MARPOR data representing pro-environmental statements (*per501 'Environmental Protection: Positive'*) and the item representing anti-growth economy statements (*per416 'Anti-Growth Economy: Positive'*), which includes favourable mentions of anti-growth politics, ecologism, green politics and sustainable development. This operationalization of the green issue dimension follows Green-Pedersen (2007b) and Stoll (2010). In order to create a positional dimension, some studies also include an item measuring favourable mentions of productivity, as this can be regarded as being opposed to statements stressing environmental protection and sustainable growth (Abou-Chadi, 2014; Lowe et al., 2011; Carter, 2006). Since the hypotheses in this chapter explicate salience shifts rather than positional shifts, I refrain from including this item and only use items that directly refer to environmental politics (cf. Green-Pedersen, 2007b).

Parties' emphasis on immigration issues is captured using items representing positive and negative statements regarding multiculturalism (*per607 'Multiculturalism: Positive'* and *per608 'Multiculturalism: Negative'*), items representing positive and negative statements regarding the national way of life, which includes statements on patriotism and nationalism (*per601 'National Way of Life: Positive'* and *per602 'National Way of Life: Negative'*) and item *per705 'Underprivileged Minority Groups: Positive'*, which includes references to immigrant groups. Since the MRG-CMP-MARPOR data does not include items that directly measure immigration statements, scholars have used different items to gauge the importance of the immigration issue dimension to parties. The above mentioned items are, although

<sup>2</sup>I note that the Ray-CHES data does not include information on environmental and immigration issue emphases in every round. The question on the salience parties attach to environmental issues was only included in the 2006 round and the immigration issue item is only available for 2006 and 2010.

in varying combinations, used frequently in recent studies (Abou-Chadi, 2014; Alonso and Fonseca, 2011; Arzheimer and Carter, 2006; Stoll, 2010). Some studies also include items capturing references to traditional morality and law and order (Meguid, 2005). Although these issues are part of the larger agenda of the far right (Mudde, 1999), this chapter seeks to explain the impact of far right support on the evolution of immigration issues (which are usually seen as their ‘primary issues’ (Mudde, 2007)), and therefore it excludes these items from the operationalization.

The third dependent variable, finally, captures the importance of the EU issue to parties using the item in the Ray-CHES data asking experts to indicate the relative importance of the EU issue in the party’s public stance. To ensure comparability, I rescale all three dependent variables to 0-4 scores, with higher values indicating greater emphasis on the respective issue.

### 5.4.2 Independent Variables

Electoral support for issue entrepreneurs constitutes the main predictor in this chapter. Parties are classified as green and far right issue entrepreneurs following recent studies (Abou-Chadi, 2014; Spoon, Hobolt and de Vries, 2014; Mudde, 2007; Norris, 2005). For the classification of Eurosceptic parties, I rely on the conceptual distinction between ‘hard Euroscepticism’ and ‘soft Euroscepticism’ as put forward by Szczerbiak and Taggart (2000). Building on an earlier contribution by Taggart (1998), who distinguishes between ‘outright and unqualified opposition’ and ‘contingent and qualified opposition’ to the process of European integration; ‘hard’ Eurosceptic parties are those parties that voice principled opposition to the EU while ‘soft’ Euroscepticism is there where *concerns* on policy areas exist. Since over the last decades the ‘permissive consensus’ on European integration shifted towards a ‘constraining dissensus’ (Hooghe and Marks, 2009), contingent opposition on some policy areas hardly constitutes a ‘new’ issue-stance. Therefore, following the conceptualization of issue entrepreneurs used in this chapter as those parties that seek to innovate the political issue market by bringing ‘new’ issues to the fore, I consider only hard-Eurosceptic parties to be genuine issue entrepreneurs. The classification of parties is consequently based on Taggart and Szczerbiak (2008, p.11).

Vote shares of the issue entrepreneurs are taken from the MRG-CMP-MARPOR and the Ray-CHES data, and updated using information from the ParlGov database (Döring and Manow, 2015). If multiple issue entrepreneurs of the same fashion (e.g. more than one far right party) were present in a given election year, vote shares are summed as to capture the combined pressure that is exercised on parties as to respond to their issue appeals. A list of all the parties classified as issue entrepreneurs is shown in table 5.1.

TABLE 5.1 – Green, Far Right &amp; Eurosceptic Issue Entrepreneurs

Country	Party	First Election
<i>Green Parties</i>		
Austria	The Greens ( <i>Die Grünen — Die Grüne Alternative</i> )	1986
Belgium	Ecologists ( <i>Ecolo</i> )	1981
	Live Differently — Green! ( <i>Agalev — Groen!</i> )	1981
Denmark	Greens ( <i>De Grønne</i> )***	1987
Finland	Green League ( <i>Vihreä Liitto</i> )	1983
France	Greens ( <i>Les Verts</i> )	1983
Germany	Greens ( <i>Bündnis 90 — Die Grünen</i> )	1983
Greece	—	—
Iceland	Left-Green Movement ( <i>Vinstri Græn</i> )	1999
Ireland	Green Party ( <i>Comhaontas Glas</i> )	1989
Italy	Green Federation ( <i>Federazione dei Verdi</i> )	1987
Luxembourg	The Greens ( <i>Déi Gréng</i> )	1984
The Netherlands	GreenLeft ( <i>GroenLinks</i> )	1989
Norway	—	—
Portugal	Greens ( <i>Os Verdes</i> )	1983
Spain	Initiative for Catalonia Greens ( <i>Iniciativa per Catalunya Verds</i> )***	2000
Sweden	Greens ( <i>Miljöpartiet de Gröna</i> )	1988
Switzerland	Greens ( <i>Grüne – Écologiste</i> )	1979
United Kingdom	Green Party***	1987
<i>Far Right Parties</i>		
Austria	Alliance for the Future of Austria ( <i>Bündnis Zukunft Österreich</i> )	2006
	Freedom Party ( <i>Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs</i> ) (since 1986)	1986
Belgium	National Front ( <i>Front National</i> )**	1991
	Flemish Bloc / Flemish Interest ( <i>Vlaams Blok / Vlaams Belang</i> )	1978
Denmark	Danish People's Party ( <i>Dansk Folkeparti</i> )	1998
	Progress Party	1973

(continued)

(Table 5.1 – continued)

Country	Party	First Election
Finland	<i>(Fremskridtspartiet)</i> True Finns	1995
	<i>(Perussuomalaiset)</i> (since 1995)	
France	National Front <i>(Front National)</i>	1986
Germany	German People's Union <i>(Deutsche Volksunion)**</i>	1998
	The Republicans <i>(Die Republikaner)**</i>	1990
	National Democratic Party of Germany <i>(Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands)**</i>	1965
Greece	Popular Orthodox Rally <i>(Laikós Orthódoxos Synagermós)**</i>	2004
Iceland	–	–
Ireland	–	–
Italy	National Alliance <i>(Alleanza Nazionale)</i> (since 1995)	1996
	Northern League <i>(Lega Nord)</i>	1992
	Social Movement – Tricolour Flame <i>(Movimento Sociale – Fiamma Tricolore)**</i>	2008
	–	–
Luxembourg	–	–
The Netherlands	Centre Democrats <i>(Centrum Democraten)**</i>	1989
	List Pim Fortuyn <i>(Lijst Pim Fortuyn)</i>	2002
	Party for Freedom <i>(Partij voor de Vrijheid)</i>	2006
	–	–
Norway	Progress Party <i>(Fremskrittspartiet)</i>	1973
Portugal	–	–
Spain	–	–
Sweden	New Democracy <i>(Ny Demokrati)</i>	1991
	Sweden Democrats <i>(Sverigedemokraterna)</i>	2002
Switzerland	Freedom Party of Switzerland <i>(Freiheitspartei der Schweiz)</i>	1987
	National Action for People and Fatherland / Swiss Democrats <i>(Nationale Aktion für Volk und Heimat / Schweizer Demokraten)</i>	1967
	Swiss People's Party (since 1971) <i>(Schweizerische Volkspartei)</i>	1971
	–	–
United Kingdom	–	–
	<u>Eurosceptic Parties</u>	
Austria	–	–
Belgium	Belgian Labour Party <i>(Partij van de Arbeid van België – Parti du Travail de Belgique)</i>	1974
	Flemish Bloc / Flemish Interest <i>(Vlaams Blok / Vlaams Belang)</i>	1978
	Communist Party <i>(Kommunistische Partij — Parti Communiste)</i>	1925
	–	–

(continued)

(Table 5.1 – continued)

Country	Party	First Election
Denmark	Unity List – Red-Green Alliance ( <i>Enhedslisten – De Rød-Grønne</i> )	1990
Finland	League for Free Finland ( <i>Vapaa Suomen Liitto</i> )*	1995
	Communist Party of Finland ( <i>Suomen Kommunistinen Puolue (Yhtenäisyys)</i> )*	2003
France	National Front ( <i>Front National</i> )	1986
	French Communist Party ( <i>Parti Communiste Française</i> )	1924
	Workers' Struggle ( <i>Lutte Ouvrière</i> )	1973
	Revolutionary Communist League ( <i>Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire</i> )	2002
	National Republican Movement ( <i>Mouvement National Républicain</i> )	2002
Germany	German People's Union ( <i>Deutsche Volksunion</i> )	1998
	The Republicans ( <i>Die Republikaner</i> )	1990
	National Democratic Party of Germany ( <i>Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands</i> )*	1965
Greece	Communist Party ( <i>Kommounistikó Kómma Elládas</i> )	1974
Ireland	Ourselves Alone ( <i>Sinn Féin</i> )	1982
Italy	Northern League ( <i>Lega Nord</i> )	1992
Luxembourg	–	–
The Netherlands	Party for Freedom ( <i>Partij voor de Vrijheid</i> )	2006
Portugal	–	–
Spain	–	–
Sweden	Greens ( <i>Miljöpartiet de Gröna</i> )	1988
	Left Party ( <i>Vänsterpartiet</i> )	1920
United Kingdom	United Kingdom Independence Party	2001
	British National Party	2010

\*\*\*: Green party is not included in CMP data; \*\*: Far right party is not included in CMP data; \*: Eurosceptic party is not included in CHES data.

To evaluate the conditional hypothesis (h2), I construct a measure of the salience that issue entrepreneurs attach to the issues they promote. For green and far right parties, the variable is based on MRG-CMP-MARPOR data and, consequently, indicates to what extent these parties emphasize environmental and immigration issues in their election manifestos. The salience that Eurosceptic parties attach to EU issues is captured using the Ray-CHES data. If multiple issue

entrepreneurs were present, the average salience is calculated, similar to Meijers (2015, p.5)

Turning now to the control variables, all models include controls for party size (at  $t - 1$ ) and incumbency status, as larger parties might find it easier to respond to issue entrepreneurs by picking up their promoted issue since they are generally better capable of maintaining broad issue profiles (Wagner and Meyer, 2014). Parties in government are, compared to opposition parties, considered to respond stronger to issues brought up in the party system (Green-Pedersen and Mortensen, 2010). I also control for GDP growth in all models, as increasing growth rates allow parties to focus their attention on non-economic concerns.<sup>3</sup> I use the percentage of change in GDP growth rates one year before the election (or 1 year before the expert survey was fielded); the data is taken from the World Bank (2015).

The models predicting green issue emphasis and EU issue importance include time dummies indicating the period following the Chernobyl disaster and the introduction of the Euro. In both cases the salience of the respective issue is thought to have increased. Finally, the models predicting immigration issue emphasis include a measure of the actual immigration rate. I take the inflow of immigrants per capita, one year before the election, combining OECD (2015) data on the yearly inflow of immigrants and Eurostat (2015) data on population size.

After dropping all parties from the sample classified as issue entrepreneurs, in order to avoid endogeneity problems, and all parties that contested less than 2 elections, in order to create meaningful time-series, the data sets for the green and immigration issue models include information on 146 political parties in 18 European democracies.<sup>4</sup> The data set for the EU models comprises information on 138 parties in 14 countries (non EU-member states, and Luxembourg since it is not included in the Ray-CHES data, are dropped from the sample). The time period under investigation is 1980 onwards. Summary statistics of all the variables can be found in table 5.2 while table 5.3 provides an overview of the operationalization of the variables.

## 5.5 Estimation Technique

I estimate several pooled time-series-cross-sectional models to examine the effects of electoral support for issue entrepreneurs on the issue agendas of other parties. Given the structure of the data, several types of dependencies in the error terms are likely to occur; specifically, the error terms within panels (i.e.

<sup>3</sup>Conversely, it has also been argued that governing parties seek to divert attention to other issues when the economy is performing poorly (see Vavreck, 2009; Greene, 2015). In that case, the expected sign of the coefficient would be positive.

<sup>4</sup>The following countries are included: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Great-Britain, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland.

TABLE 5.2 – Descriptive Statistics

<i>Models predicting green &amp; immigration issue emphasis (CMP data)</i>	<b>n</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Sd</b>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>
Green issue emphasis	914	0.339	0.329	0.000	4.000
Immigration issue emphasis	914	0.355	0.357	0.000	3.297
Green party support <sub>t-1</sub>	814	2.595	3.400	0.000	14.350
Far right party support <sub>t-1</sub>	814	4.716	6.913	0.000	27.650
Party size <sub>t-1</sub>	814	16.281	13.692	0.000	51.287
GDP growth rate <sub>t-1</sub>	914	2.211	2.191	-5.185	9.084
Immigration rate <sub>t-1</sub>	690	6.807	6.032	0.113	30.285
Mean green issue salience green parties	717	0.676	0.817	0.000	2.865
Mean immigration issue salience far right parties	717	0.310	0.610	0.000	4.000
<b>Dichotomous variables</b>		%			
Incumbent party (gov/opp)	914	34.42%			
Chernobyl (>04.1986)	914	81.73%			
<i>Models predicting EU issue emphasis (CHES data)</i>	<b>n</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Sd</b>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>
EU issue emphasis	770	2.418	0.714	0.000	4.000
Eurosceptic party support <sub>t-1</sub>	771	3.685	5.410	0.000	24.800
Party size <sub>t-1</sub>	757	12.584	13.587	0.000	51.300
GDP growth rate <sub>t-1</sub>	771	1.836	2.8938	-8.269	9.634
Mean EU issue salience Eurosceptic parties	771	1.160	1.281	0.000	4.000
<b>Dichotomous variables</b>		%			
Incumbent party (gov/opp)	771	33.20%			
Euro (≥2002)	771	31.13%			

TABLE 5.3 – Operationalization of the Variables

<b>Dependent variables</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Data source</b>
Green issue emphasis	Sum of attention to green issues ( <i>per501</i> + <i>per416</i> )	Own calculation Volkens et al. (2014)
Immigration issue emphasis	Sum of attention to immigration issues ( <i>per607</i> + <i>per608</i> + <i>per601</i> + <i>per602</i> + <i>per705</i> )	Own calculation Volkens et al. (2014)
EU issue emphasis	Expert-survey item Salience of European integration in party's public stance	Bakker et al. (2015) & Ray (1999)
<b>Independent variables</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Data source</b>
Green party support	Vote share green parties <sub>t-1</sub> (for list of green parties see table 5.1)	Volkens et al. (2014) & Döring and Manow (2015)
Far right party support	Vote share far right parties <sub>t-1</sub> (for list of far right parties see table 5.1)	Volkens et al. (2014) & Döring and Manow (2015)
Eurosceptic party support	Vote share Eurosceptic parties <sub>t-1</sub> (for list of Eurosceptic parties see table 5.1)	Bakker et al. (2015) & Döring and Manow (2015)
<b>Control variables</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Data source</b>
Incumbent party	1 if in government in period preceding election or in year of expert survey wave, otherwise 0	Volkens et al. (2014) & Bakker et al. (2015)
Party size	Vote share election <sub>t-1</sub>	Volkens et al. (2014) & Bakker et al. (2015)
GDP	Change (%) in GDP growth rate <sub>t-1</sub>	the World Bank (2015)
Immigration rate	Yearly inflow of immigrants per capita <sub>t-1</sub>	OECD (2015) & Eurostat (2015)
Chernobyl	Time dummy, 1 if date > April 1986, 0 otherwise	
Euro	Time dummy, 1 if date ≥ 2002, 0 otherwise	

parties) might correlate over time ('serial correlation') and it is likely that the error terms are not independently and identically distributed across panels ('panel-heteroskedasticity'). Tests indeed indicate the presence of these types of autocorrelation in the data.<sup>5</sup> Adding a lagged dependent variable (LDV) to the right-hand side of the equation is a solution to absorb the effect of the dependent variable at  $t - 1$  on the value of the dependent variable at time  $t$ . However, this would reduce the  $N$  and it has been argued that adding an LDV to the model can lead to some estimation problems (Plümper, Troeger and Manow, 2005; Achen, 2000). Therefore, as an alternative, I rely on a Prais-Winsten transformation for ordinary least squares (OLS) to account for the panel-specific autoregressive(1) error structure. Moreover, to account for the fact that parties are nested within countries and years, the standard errors are clustered by party (the cross-sectional identifier) and are, as such, robust to panel-heteroskedasticity. Finally, as the hypotheses explicate a causal effect of support for issue entrepreneurs on the agendas of other parties, I use party-dummy fixed effects and restrict the analysis to within-party over time variation (Abou-Chadi, 2014).

The following models are estimated:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Salience Green [Immigration] [EU] issues}_{i,t} = \\ \beta_0 + \beta_1 (\text{Green [FarRight] [Eurosceptic] Party Support}_{i,t-1}) \\ + (\text{controls}) + v_i + \epsilon_{i,t} \end{aligned} \quad (5.1)$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Salience Green [Immigration] [EU] issues}_{i,t} = \\ \beta_0 + \beta_1 (\text{Green [FarRight] [Eurosceptic] Party Support}_{i,t-1}) \\ + \beta_2 (\text{Mean Issue Salience Issue Entrepreneurs}_{i,t-1}) \\ + \beta_3 (\text{Green [FarRight] [Eurosceptic] Party Support}_{i,t-1} \\ \times \text{Mean Issue Salience Issue Entrepreneurs}_{i,t-1}) \\ + (\text{controls}) + v_i + \epsilon_{i,t} \end{aligned} \quad (5.2)$$

where subscript  $i$  denotes parties and  $t$  indicates time. The first model serves the aim to evaluate whether the electoral success of issue entrepreneurs has a direct effect on the issue agendas of other parties (H1). The second model incorporates the salience green, far right and Eurosceptic parties attach to 'their' issues and includes an interaction effect of this variable with the electoral support variable as to evaluate the conditional hypothesis (H2).

## 5.6 Results

Table 5.4 presents the regression results. It shows how electoral support for issue entrepreneurs at  $t - 1$  impacts the issue salience strategies of other parties at time

<sup>5</sup>A Wooldridge test (Wooldridge, 2002; Drukker, 2003) was used to detect the presence of serial correlation in the data and a modified Wald test (Greene, 2000; Baum, 2001) suggested rejection of the null-hypothesis of no groupwise heteroskedasticity.



TABLE 5.4 – Regression Models Predicting Party Emphases of Green, Immigration and European Integration Issues

	<b>Model 1</b> <i>Green issues</i> <i>CMP data</i>	<b>Model 2</b> <i>Immigration issues</i> <i>CMP data</i>	<b>Model 3</b> <i>EU issues</i> <i>CHES data</i>
<b>Green Party Support<sub>t-1</sub></b>	<b>-0.0167***</b> <b>(0.0040)</b>		
<b>Far Right Party Support<sub>t-1</sub></b>		<b>0.0113**</b> <b>(0.0054)</b>	
<b>Eurosceptic Party Support<sub>t-1</sub></b>			<b>0.0211***</b> <b>(0.0073)</b>
Incumbent Party	0.0098 (0.0235)	-0.0287 (0.040)	0.0567 (0.0565)
Party Size	0.0024 (0.0017)	0.0053 (0.0075)	-0.0059 (0.0050)
GDP	0.0009 (0.0041)	0.0149* (0.0084)	-0.0148** (.0058)
Chernobyl	0.1467*** (0.0176)		
Immigration rate ( <i>log</i> )		0.0230* (0.0176)	
Euro			0.3963*** (0.0456)
(Constant)	0.9997*** (0.0702)	0.9977*** (0.2988)	1.7210*** (0.0976)
<i>N</i>	810	609	756
<i>Party Clusters</i>	146	130	135
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.6404	0.5027	0.4684

Note: Prais-Winsten regression coefficients with robust standard errors clustered by party in parentheses and party dummy fixed effects (not shown in table). \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$  (two-tailed tests). The dependent variables capture the importance of green, immigration and EU issues to parties at  $t_0$  measured on a 0-4 scale using party manifesto data (model 1 & 2) and expert survey data (model 3).

$t$ , as the three estimated coefficients are statistically significant. The impact differs, however, across the types of issue entrepreneurs. Green party support leads other parties to de-emphasize environmental issues, as indicated by the negative sign of the estimated coefficient. Far right support, on the other hand, leads to further politicization of the immigration issue on the agendas of other parties. These results are in line with those reported by Abou-Chadi (2014), who investigated shifts in mainstream parties' agendas only and used a different operationalization of green and immigration issue importance.<sup>6</sup> As such, these results offer further support for the argument that green and far right parties have diverging effects on the electoral strategies of other parties (Abou-Chadi, 2014).

<sup>6</sup>Abou-Chadi (2014) used items *per607 'Multiculturalism: Positive'* and *per608 'Multiculturalism: Negative'* to measure immigration issue salience and items *per501 'Environmental Protection: Positive'* and *per410 'Productivity: Positive'* for environmental issue salience

Euroscepticism has a contagious effect on the issue salience strategies of other parties. The estimated coefficient for Eurosceptic party support is positive and statistically significant ( $\beta = .002$ ). An increase in support for Eurosceptic parties by 1 standard deviation corresponds, *ceteris paribus*, with a 0.11 increase of importance of EU issues in the agendas of other parties, measured on a 0 – 4 scale. Thus, Eurosceptic party support is not only capable of changing mainstream party policy *positions* on European integration (Meijers, 2015), it also leads other parties to increase the salience of the issue. This supports findings on the politicization of European integration matters in Denmark, where it has been shown that fringe party mobilization of the issue leads other parties to address EU issues more heavily in their parliamentary questions and speeches (van de Wardt, 2015).

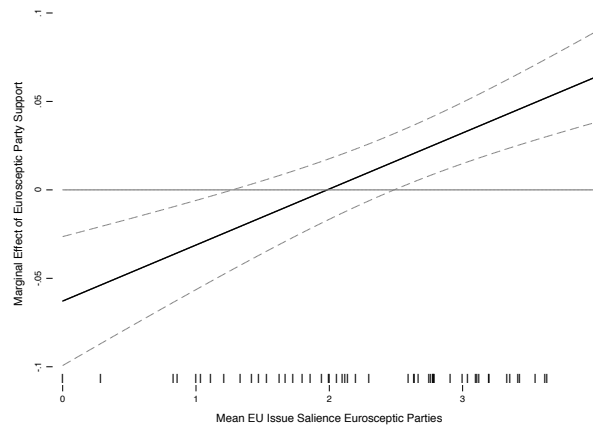
Turning to the control variables, the models find no effect for party size or governing status. The time dummy coefficients (Chernobyl and the introduction of the Euro) suggest that parties increased the salience of green and EU issues following these events. Parties' emphasis on immigration issues positively corresponds with changes in immigration rates, which supports arguments stressing the dynamic relationship between societal developments and issue concerns of political elites (Stimson, MacKuen and Erikson, 1995).

In the second step of the analysis, I estimate the three main models again, this time including a measure of the average salience issue entrepreneurs attach to their issues, and interaction terms between this variable and the variable indicating electoral support for issue entrepreneurs. Figure 5.3 presents the marginal effects plots (Brambor, Clark and Golder, 2006), the accompanying regression tables can be found in Appendix D (table D.1).

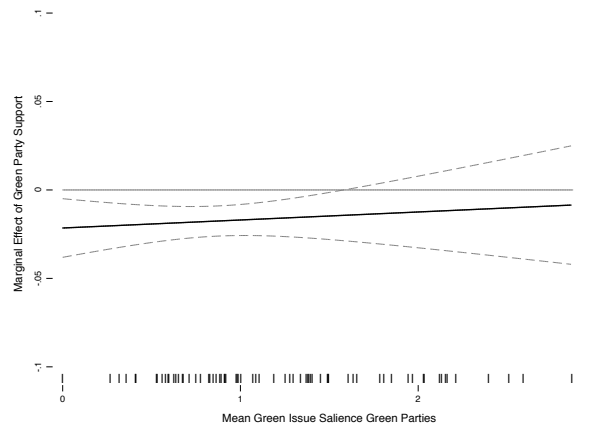
Figure 5.3(a) depicts the marginal effect of Eurosceptic party support on the salience of EU issues in other parties' agendas across the variable indicating the extent to which Eurosceptic parties regard EU issues as important for their party. A conditional effect of Eurosceptic party support is clearly visible: if Eurosceptic parties find EU issues not to be important, their support at  $t - 1$  has a negative effect on the issue salience of other parties at time  $t$ . If Eurosceptic parties regard EU issues as important, on the other hand, their electoral success has a contagious effect. This positive effect is observed at a value of the conditioning variable of 2.6 and higher; a value of 3 in the Ray-CHES data indicates that the EU issue is one of the most important issues for the party. This result is in line with the conditional hypothesis (h2) as put forward in this chapter and underscores that, on the EU issue dimension, contagion effects are only observed when parties are confronted with issue entrepreneurs that publicize their issues strongly. As such, the conditional impact of Euroscepticism on mainstream party *positioning*, as found by Meijers (2015), is suggested to also hold for a broader sample of parties (as in this chapter also non-mainstream parties are included) and, more importantly, can be extended to apply to salience models of party competition.

Figure 5.3(b) and 5.3(c) show the conditional effect of support for issue entrepreneurs in the case of green and far right parties. Both figures indicate that

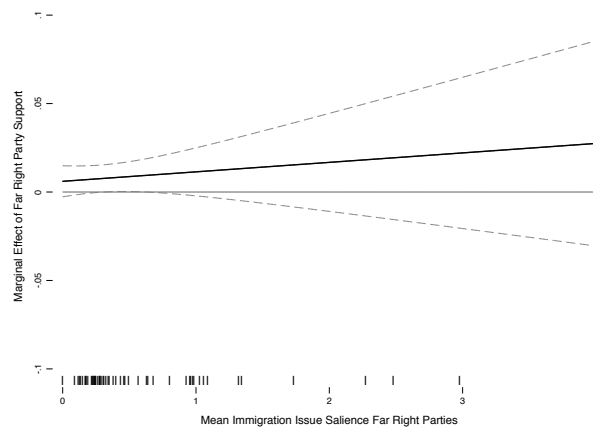
FIGURE 5.3 – Marginal Effects of Support for Issue Entrepreneurs on Other Parties' Issue Emphases



(a) EU issues



(b) Green issues



(c) Immigration issues

*Note:* The figures show marginal effect plots with 95% confidence intervals. The rug plots indicate individual observations for the conditioning variable. Tables with the coefficient estimates can be found in appendix D (table D.1).

the impact of green and far right party support does not depend upon the importance these parties attach to ‘their’ issues. Parties de-emphasize environmental issues in response to green party support and emphasize immigration issues in response to far right party support, no matter the emphasis green or far right parties themselves put on their issues. The conditioning variables in these cases are based on party manifesto data and are more heavily right-skewed than the conditioning variable in 5.3(a), which is based on the Ray-CHES data. There are fewer observations for larger values in these cases, which is also indicated by the large confidence intervals in plots (b) and (c), implying that we should be cautious when interpreting these results.

Taken together, though, the results suggest support for the main arguments as put forward in this chapter. First, not only green and far right party support, but also Eurosceptic party support puts a pressure on other parties to adjust their issue salience strategies. Second, the contagion effect of Eurosceptic parties is conditional, depending on whether these parties pursue an issue entrepreneurial strategy which consists of a strong issue salience aspect, in addition to their deviant policy position. Third, such a conditional effect seems to be absent, or at least limited, in as far as green and far right issue entrepreneurs are concerned.

### 5.6.1 Robustness Checks

I carry out several sensitivity analyses to test the stability of the results presented above. First, I run model 3, predicting emphasis on EU issues, using data from the MRG-CMP-MARPOR dataset. To recall, I employ the Ray-CHES data in the main analysis since many of the Eurosceptic parties are, in contrast to many of the green and far right parties, not included in the MRG-CMP-MARPOR data and information on their issue salience strategies is necessary to evaluate the conditional hypothesis (h2). However, hypothesis 1 requires only information on vote shares of the Eurosceptic parties; hence, I can test the unconditional impact of Eurosceptic party support on the EU issue salience of other parties using both datasets. I sum the two items in the MRG-CMP-MARPOR data that include references to European integration (*per108 ‘European integration: Positive’* and *per110 ‘European integration: Negative’*) to gauge the importance of EU issues in party manifestos. Table D.2 in Appendix D presents the results of this analysis, and shows that the results, both in terms of statistical significance and substantive interpretation, are highly similar. This should increase confidence in the presented results not simply being an artefact of different datasets used in different models.

Second, I re-estimate all the models in the main analysis for a subsample of mainstream parties only. Studies on party response to issue entrepreneurial strategies tend to focus on mainstream parties (Meijers, 2015; Abou-Chadi, 2014; Han, 2015) as these parties are considered crucial in policy making. There is, however, no theoretical reason as to why contagion effects should be limited to mainstream party agendas only (cf. van Spanje, 2010). Nevertheless, tables D.3 - D.4 and figure D.1 in Appendix D present analyses for a subset of mainstream

parties (classified on the basis of party family designation).<sup>7</sup> The results do not differ substantially from the results presented above.

Third, the models predicting EU issue salience are re-estimated including a control variable for intra-party dissent on the issue. Previous research found that intra-party conflicts over European integration impact parties' inclination to put emphasis on the issue. Although parties are generally hesitant to address issues on which they are internally divided, partisan elites might be unable to de-emphasize an issue on which heavy intra party divisions have emerged (Steenbergen and Scott, 2004; Netjes and Binnema, 2007). Intra-party dissent is measured using the item in the Ray-CHES data asking experts to rate parties according to the degree of internal unity or division on the EU issue. To capture the expected curvilinear relationship, I also include the squared term of the variable (van de Wardt, 2014b). The results are robust to the inclusion of this control variable (see table D.5 and figure D.2 in Appendix D). In the main part of the analysis, however, I present models that do not include this variable as to ensure comparability with the models predicting green and immigration issue emphasis (for which no measures of intra-party divisions are available).

Finally, I run sensitivity analyses accounting for the fact that several of the main variables are right-skewed. Specifically, the conditioning variables in the interactive models as well as the measures of green and immigration issue salience based on party manifesto data are skewed. A log-transformation of the variables in question is sometimes suggested as a way to alleviate this problem (Gelman and Hill, 2007). Appendix D (tables D.6, D.7 and figure D.3) presents models using log-transformations; the results are substantially similar to the models presented in the main analysis, but since log-transformed variables are difficult to interpret, the main models include the variables on the original scales.

### 5.6.2 Omitted Variable Bias

A potential problem with the results presented above relates to the possibility of omitted variable bias. That is: it could be that the association between support for issue entrepreneurs and issue salience adjustments by other parties is distorted by shifts in public opinion. If voters are more concerned with the environment, or the EU, this might cause both increasing support for green or Eurosceptic parties as well as salience shifts at the part of other parties. Previous research has established, in this respect, that parties adapt to changes in voters' attitudes, although this mainly concerns mainstream parties (Adams et al., 2004, 2006; Ezrow et al., 2011). One possibility to deal with this would be to include a measure of the salience of environmental, immigration and EU issues among voters. Spoon, Hobolt and de Vries (2014), investigating the impact of green party success on the salience that other parties attach to environmental issues, indeed control for 'voter concern for the environment', although they note that excluding this variable from

<sup>7</sup>In accordance with most studies, social democratic, liberal, Christian democratic and conservative parties are considered mainstream parties.

the models results in “nearly identical results for the other variables [...], except for the [GDP] growth variable” (Spoon, Hobolt and de Vries, 2014, p.377, footnote 11). Here, I follow Abou-Chadi (2014) and refrain from including such a measure.

Not only is the measurement of voter concerns, generally based on survey responses to the ‘most important problem’ question, error-prone (Wlezien, 2005); it is also highly endogenous to the process under investigation here; parties’ issue salience shifts (Abou-Chadi, 2014, p.14). The issues that partisan elites prime as being important determine, at least to a considerable extent, which ‘problems’ are perceived as pressing among voters (cf. Bélanger and Meguid, 2008).

Further, I re-estimate all models and add a lagged dependent variable (LDV) to the right-hand side of the equation. The results remained unchanged (see tables D.8- D.9 and figure D.4 in Appendix D). The LDV absorbs the possible effect of public opinion at  $t - 1$  on parties’ issue emphasis at  $t - 1$  and, hence, reduces the possible bias (Abou-Chadi, 2014, p.14). I note, moreover, that several other studies on the EU salience at the party level refrain from including a measure of voters’ concerns.<sup>8</sup> Taken together, the results should, indeed, indicate a direct causal link between support for issue entrepreneurs and salience shifts in the agendas of other parties.

## 5.7 Discussion

This chapter has empirically investigated the impact of electoral support for issue entrepreneurs on the agendas of other parties. It has been shown that, in addition to green and far right party success, successful Eurosceptic parties pressure their competitors to adjust their issue salience strategies. Specifically, parties increase the salience of EU issues when confronted with increasing electoral support for Eurosceptic parties. However, this contagion effect is conditional, depending on the extent to which Eurosceptic challengers themselves regard EU issues to be important. For green and far right parties, who uniformly perceive ‘their’ issues of great significance, such a conditional effect seems to be absent. These findings have several implications for our understanding of issue evolution and politicization as well as for the analysis of party competition in modern democracies more generally.

First, this chapter highlights the role of Eurosceptic parties in the politicization of EU issues at the party level. The findings suggest that Eurosceptic party support does not only induce other parties to adjust their positions on European integration (Meijers, 2015), but also leads them to attach greater salience to EU issues. This is in line with evidence from case studies, which have established that fringe party mobilization of the EU pressures other parties to take up the issue more strongly (van de Wardt, 2015). Although a wider literature has long focused on Eurosceptic parties (de Vries and Edwards, 2009; de Vries, 2007; Hooghe and Marks, 2009; Taggart, 1998), a causal relationship in a broad comparative context

<sup>8</sup>These include studies by van de Wardt, de Vries and Hobolt (2014); van de Wardt (2014b); Steenbergen and Scott (2004); Netjes and Binnema (2007).

between their electoral success and salience shifts in the agendas of other parties had previously not been established.

Second, this chapter speaks to an emerging literature on the interaction between issue entrepreneurs and rival parties. Taking into account both the nature of EU issues, as having a significant positional component to them as well as being orthogonal to the general left-right dimension, and the nature of Eurosceptic parties, as non issue owners, this chapter theorized that adaptation strategies are likely to prevail. As such, it corroborates the theoretical framework as explicated by Abou-Chadi (2014), who argued that partisan elites strategically respond to the influx of new issues in party systems, assessing the possible effects of issue politicization on their expected electoral performance. Here, it has been shown that these considerations also seem to play a role when EU issues are concerned.

Third, and related, this chapter highlights that it is important to conceptualize issue entrepreneurial strategies as consisting of two elements: a deviant policy position on an issue dimension in combination with a strong emphasis on this issue dimension (cf. Carmines and Stimson, 1986; de Vries and Hobolt, 2012). The conditional impact of Eurosceptic parties shows how issue entrepreneurship is not a fixed condition, but that parties can pursue such strategies by allocating salience to an issue dimension. This should inform our wider understanding of issue entrepreneurial strategies, and their effects, in European party systems. Additional research should, in this regard, focus on the incentives for far left- and far right parties to highlight their anti-EU position more strongly.

Moreover, whereas the current chapter focused on the average impact of issue entrepreneurs on the agendas of all other parties, it can be important to specify further and investigate the responsiveness of different types of parties. We know, for example, that right of centre parties change their positions more strongly in response to increasing support for the far right than do centre left parties (Abou-Chadi, 2014), whereas the opposite pattern is observed in the case of Eurosceptic party support (Meijers, 2015). Future research should address whether such patterns hold for salience shifts as well.

6

---

## Conclusion

---



“ The outcome of the game of politics depends on which of a multitude of possible conflicts gains the dominant position. ”

---

Elmer E. Schattschneider, *The Semisovereign People. A Realist's View of Democracy in America*, 1960 (p.62)

## 6.1 Introduction

This dissertation investigates three distinct components of the issue attention strategies pursued by political parties in western European party systems. First, it examines the extent to which a party's issue attention is associated with the systemic salience of issues – that is, the association between the salience individual parties allocate to an issue and the salience of the issue to all other parties in the system. Second, this dissertation examines the scope of policy agendas – how narrowly or how broadly do parties distribute attention across policy issues? Thirdly, it assesses the degree of innovation in policy platforms. Do parties address new issue dimension more strongly in response to increasing electoral support for issue entrepreneurs that promote these issues?

The hypothesis guiding this dissertation is that both external party system pressures and internal party organizational structures crucially affect parties' issue salience decisions. External party system pressures are conceptualized as a party's relative position within the competitive party system, captured by the challenger-mainstream framework. The expectation is that challenger parties, due to their lack of experience with government participation and their incentive to reshape the political landscape, adopt policy platforms that deviate from the political status quo. They reduce the scope of their issue appeals and focus strongly a few issues that they deem strategically favourable. Moreover, they neglect shifts in the system salience of issue domains. Mainstream parties, on the other hand, are expected to pursue less risky issue profiles, as their programmatic strategies are affected by their past experience in government and their desire to get into office again. As a result, it is hypothesized that they present agendas broader in scope than challenger parties. Moreover, they should be responsive to shifts in the systemic salience of issue domains. In addition, this dissertation offers a second conceptualization of external party system pressures as the degree of electoral support for issue entrepreneurs. Issue entrepreneurs are parties that seek to

politicize a new issue dimension. Increasing support for such a party, then, is expected to put a pressure on other parties to shift attention and engage in political competition on new issue dimensions.

With regard to the impact of internal party organizational structures, the hypothesis is that the balance of power between party leaders and the activist base within parties determines whether parties are more oriented towards seeking access to office or whether they are more oriented towards satisfying their policy objectives. A policy-oriented party is expected maintain its focus on the party's traditional agenda, which implies putting forward policy platforms that are confined in scope. Moreover, it is expected that a party of this kind will be less responsive to shifts in the systemic salience of issue domains. Office oriented parties, the expectation is, present broader 'catch all' agendas and are more concerned with the systemic salience of issue domains.

This concluding chapter evaluates whether the hypotheses guiding this dissertation hold up to empirical scrutiny. Before doing that, however, it summarizes the findings from the individual empirical chapters. After that, the contributions to the literature and the implications of the results are discussed. The chapter closes by elaborating upon possible avenues for future research.

## 6.2 Summary of the Main Findings

Chapter 3 examines the extent to which a party's issue attention is associated with the systemic salience of issues. External party system pressures are in this chapter conceptualized as a party's position in the party system as being a mainstream government, mainstream opposition or challenger party. Four findings are highlighted in the chapter. First, shifts in the systemic salience of issue domains are associated with the salience adjustments that individual parties make in their election platforms. This indicates that there is an agenda component to parties' issue attention strategies. Second, challenger parties are less responsive to systemic salience shifts than mainstream parties. Third, mainstream opposition parties are somewhat less responsive to systemic salience shifts than incumbent parties, although this is mainly the case with regard to the cultural issue domain. Fourth, the chapter presents indicative evidence that intra party politics has a conditioning effect. Parties in which leaders are powerful respond more strongly to systemic salience shifts than parties in which activists are dominant. However, this effect is only found with regard to the economic issue domain. On the cultural issue domain, leadership-oriented parties show a less pronounced response to systemic salience shifts than do activist-oriented parties.

Chapter 4 is concerned with the scope of parties' issue agendas. External party system pressures are in this chapter conceptualized as a party's position in the party system as being a mainstream government, mainstream opposition or challenger party. Five findings stand out from the empirical analyses. First, challenger parties present agendas that are more narrow in scope than do mainstream parties. Second, the platforms of mainstream opposition and mainstream

government parties exhibit a similar level of issue diversity. Third, mainstream parties change the scope of their agenda in response to office exclusion and in response to vote losses in the previous election cycle. Fourth, the intra party balance of power has a conditioning effect on levels of agenda scope: the differences between challenger and mainstream parties become less pronounced for parties in which leaders are more dominant. If leaders are completely unconstrained, there are no differences observed in issue diversity between challenger and mainstream parties. Fifth, the intra party balance of power has a conditioning effect on changes in agenda scope: mainstream parties in which the leadership is dominant respond more strongly to office exclusion and vote losses than mainstream parties in which activists are powerful.

Chapter 5 assesses the degree of innovation in parties' issue agendas. External party system pressures are in this chapter conceptualized as the degree of electoral support for issue entrepreneurs – that is, support for green, far right and Eurosceptic parties. The empirical models highlight four findings. First, parties increase attention to European integration and immigration issues in response to support for Eurosceptic and far right parties. Second, parties decrease attention to environmental issues in response to green party success. Third, the effect of Eurosceptic party support is conditional upon the salience the challengers themselves attach to the issue: only if Eurosceptic parties highlight their position strongly, other parties respond and shift attention to European integration issues. Fourth, the effect of green and far right party support is not conditional – that means: the marginal effect of increasing electoral support for green and far right parties does not vary dependent upon the salience green and far right parties allocate to their issues.

Taken together, the results presented in the empirical chapters indicate support for the core expectations as put forward in this dissertation. External party system pressures and internal party organizational structures affect the issue attention strategies of political parties. With regard to the external party system pressures, the findings indicate that challenger parties adopt policy platforms that attempt to change the political status quo. They are less responsive to the systemic salience of issue domains and focus on a few issues only. Mainstream parties seek to stabilize the political status quo, they respond more strongly to the systemic salience of issue domains and distribute their attention across a wide range of issues. Moreover, external party system pressures in the form of increasing electoral support for issue entrepreneurs exerts a pressure on parties to adjust their issue attention strategies. With regard to intra party politics, it is found that the balance of power between party leaders and the activist base conditions the extent to which parties respond to external incentives. If the organizational structure of parties favours activists, parties are more likely to limit agenda scope and ignore systemic salience shifts. If leaders are more powerful, on the other hand, parties are more likely to increase agenda scope and respond to systemic salience shifts.

### 6.3 Implications & Academic Contributions

This dissertation relates to an expanding body of research on party behaviour that seeks to ‘bring salience back in’ (Klüver and Spoon, 2015, 2014; Klüver and Sagarzazu, 2016; Bevan and John, 2016; Froio, Bevan and Jennings, 2016). The findings have several implications for different streams of literature within political science. I begin by discussing its theoretical implications for the study of issue competition.

A dominant assumption underpinning empirical studies of issue competition has been that parties emphasize their preferred issues while they downplay the importance of issues that might benefit their competitors. Recent studies have criticized salience theory for this one-sided theoretical perspective (Green-Pedersen and Mortensen, 2014). This dissertation accommodates such critiques by highlighting additional components of parties’ issue attention strategies. It shows that there is a strong agenda component to parties’ salience strategies and that parties deal with a ‘mobilization – persuasion’ trade-off which, consequently, leads to systematic differences in the scope of issue agendas. Moreover, it highlights that parties innovate their agendas by addressing new issues, and that they do so strategically by taking into account the expected electoral costs and benefits of politicization.

This dissertation does, however, not represent the first attempt to study such additional components of parties’ issue attention strategies. There are several studies of ‘issue engagement’, but they have mostly focused on election campaigns in the United States (Damore, 2005; Sigelman and Buell, 2004). With regard to the European context, the empirical work has either been of descriptive nature (Green-Pedersen, 2007b) or it has been limited to specific countries or issues (Green-Pedersen and Mortensen, 2010, 2014; van de Wardt, 2015). This dissertation offers a contribution by considering the association between individual parties’ attention to issue domains and the degree of salience their competitors allocate to these issue areas, across time and in a wide range of countries. The findings offer support for the notion that the systemic salience of issues constrains individual parties’ attention to these issues (Steenbergen and Scott, 2004; Green-Pedersen and Mortensen, 2010) and highlights that issue salience strategies are characterized by a common agenda component (Green-Pedersen and Mortensen, 2010).

The finding that there is a strong agenda component to parties’ issue attention represents an important theoretical innovation, as existing theories solely focus on the incentives for parties to campaign on the issues that give them advantages over their competitors. In addition, it has implications for how voters perceive parties and policies, and reach electoral decisions. The literature on ‘learning effects’ has generated extensive evidence that the ‘information-rich environment’ of an election campaign reduces voters’ uncertainty about the policy positions and ideology of political candidates (for an overview see Hillygus, 2010). In the ‘ideal’ political campaign, then, competing candidates focus on the same set of issues,

enabling voters to gain knowledge of their policy proposals and making it easier for them to infer which candidate's policy positions come closest to their own preferences (Downs, 1957). Issue engagement should help voters reach informed electoral decisions and is, hence, desirable from a normative perspective. The findings presented in this dissertation advance our understanding of the factors that determine whether parties 'talk about the same things', which in turn affects the probability that election campaigns are characterized by issue engagement.

The second component of issue salience strategies that this dissertation investigates is agenda scope. Research on this topic is relatively scarce. To my knowledge, Greene (2015) is the first to systemically assess differences in issue attention diversity across parties. Unlike Greene (2015), however, the present study argues that differences in agenda scope are explained by the mainstream-challenger logic, and not by the opposition-government dichotomy. Other studies do not provide explanations for differences in issue diversity, but rather focus on the electoral consequences of strategies of issue diversification (Kirchheimer, 1966; Somer-Topcu, 2015). It is argued that by adding more issues to the agenda, parties become more catch all, which in turn is likely to deliver electoral gains. This dissertation adds to this literature by assessing changes in agenda scope, thereby acknowledging that parties sometimes decrease issue diversity in order to pursue core vote strategies (Green, 2011). Hence, this dissertation offers a contribution by studying the *dynamics* of the breadth of policy platforms.

The third component of issue salience strategies this dissertation investigates is the degree of innovation in party agendas. Although being far from the first study to address such a topic, this dissertation contributes to the literature by broadening the scope of inquiry. Previous work mainly focusses on parties' attention to environmental and immigration issues as a result of the pressure that is exerted by increasing electoral support for green and far right parties (Abou-Chadi, 2014; Spoon, Hobolt and de Vries, 2014; van Spanje, 2010; Han, 2015). This dissertation argues that Eurosceptic party support also induces parties to adjust their issue strategies. Moreover, existing work conceptualizes 'contagion effects' predominantly in terms of parties' positional shifts. A contagious effect, then, is observed when parties approach the position of the issue entrepreneur. It has been shown that parties shift towards more restrictive positions on immigration issues when far right parties gain electoral strength (van Spanje, 2010; Abou-Chadi, 2014; Han, 2015) and that they become less supportive of European integration when pressured by Eurosceptic party support (Meijers, 2015). This dissertation considers salience effects, and investigates whether support for green, far right and Eurosceptic leads other parties to adapt and shift attention to environmental, immigration and European integration issues.

The results highlight that contagion effects in terms of issue salience are observed in the case of far right and Eurosceptic party support, and contribute to our understanding of issue evolutions in modern democracies. The findings also have implications for the ongoing debate on the consequences of public support for far right and Eurosceptic parties on public policy. The direct influence of these

parties is said to be limited as they have rarely participated in government; and when in office, these parties find it difficult to implement their radical agendas (Akkerman, 2012). Mudde (2007) notes, in this respect, that the *indirect* effect of such parties, through their impact on the agendas of competitors, is probably greater. This dissertation offers support for this argument, insofar that it shows that increasing far right and Eurosceptic party support leads to a further politicization of immigration and European integration issues in the policy platforms of other parties.

Above, I summarized the first overarching contribution that this dissertation offers: the empirical investigation of additional components of issue attention strategies that go beyond a party's tendency to focus on its preferred issues. A second contribution emerges from advancing a behavioural classification of political parties. This dissertation adopts the threefold distinction between mainstream government, mainstream opposition and challenger parties, and shows how this classification is relevant for explaining differences in issue attention across parties. In particular, the mainstream-challenger framework is crucial for understanding differences between parties in terms of issue attention diversity and in terms of their responsiveness to the party system agenda.

The challenger-mainstream framework is not new (de Vries and Hobolt, 2012), but this dissertation applies it in order to examine a wider range of issue strategies than previous studies have done. Earlier work has mainly used the challenger concept to assess the parties' incentives to campaign on European integration issues (de Vries and Hobolt, 2012; Hobolt and de Vries, 2015; van de Wardt, de Vries and Hobolt, 2014; van de Wardt, 2015). The present study offers a specific contribution to the literature on challenger parties by arguing that challengers also respond to their unfavourable position in the party system by confining their issue appeals and by ignoring shifts in the systemic salience of issue domains. In a similar vein, this dissertation shows that being a mainstream party implies having a broader issue profile and responding more strongly to systemic salience shifts. As such, it advances our understanding of party type classifications and isolates the impact of prior experience in government as a crucial factor that affects parties' strategic behaviour.

The findings regarding the programmatic issue strategies of challenger parties have broader implications, especially given the many challenges that face contemporary democracies. Electoral research has extensively documented how, over the past few decades, party identifications weakened and partisan dealignment increased (Dalton and Wattenberg, 2000), party membership declined (Mair and van Biezen, 2001; van Biezen and Poguntke, 2014), electoral volatility increased (Mair, 2002); and how citizens have grown more distrustful of politicians and have become more disillusioned about the functioning of the democratic process (Dalton, 2004; Hay, 2007). In sum, "western European democracies have suffered from growing popular withdrawal and disengagement from conventional politics" (van Biezen and Poguntke, 2014, p.206). Against this backdrop, the popular

appeal of challenger parties is likely to increase. Indeed, successful new challengers have emerged in the aftermath of the Euro-crisis (Hobolt and Tilley, 2016), with examples including such parties as the Alternative for Germany, Podemos and Ciudadanos (Spain) and the Five Star Movement (Italy). The findings as presented in this dissertation suggest that it is not likely that such challengers will connect their issue profiles to that of the mainstream. Parties of this kind ignore the systemic salience of issue domains and narrow down their focus on a few issues that they deem strategically favourable. As such, they are capable of offering a clear policy alternative to mainstream politics. This is likely to result in greater party polarization on issues that were previously considered to be the domain of consensus politics, such as European integration. Moreover, challengers contribute to the increased ‘heterogeneity’ of the supply side of politics. Kitschelt (1994, p.118) speaks in this context of “product differentiation”; the incentive for parties to occupy a specific segment in the electoral market in order to differentiate themselves from competitors. A further segmentation of electoral markets, driven by challenger parties that are not constrained by government responsibility for policy outcomes, is likely to have destabilizing effects on political systems. For example, it will likely become more difficult for parties to find common ground and form coalition governments that have the support of a majority of the legislature, as has been exemplified in the aftermath of the Spanish national elections in 2015 and 2016.

Third, this dissertation contributes to the literature by highlighting the impact of internal party organizational structures. By doing so, it relaxes the restrictive assumption of parties as unitary actors and incorporates behavioural theories of political parties (Strøm, 1990; Müller and Strøm, 1999). There is no shortage of literature on internal party dynamics (Cross and Katz, 2013). It is, for example, widely acknowledged that rank-and-file members constrain the autonomy of party leaders and determine the limits of a party’s strategic and programmatic flexibility (Scarrow, 2015; Hertner, 2015; Polk and Kölln, 2016). Nevertheless, there are only few studies of party competition that empirically examine the impact of internal party politics on parties’ strategic behaviour. This is probably due to the fact that information on internal processes of parties is relatively hard to acquire (Polk and Kölln, 2016). The few studies that exist point out that internal organizational structures mediate how parties respond to external stimuli (Schumacher, de Vries and Vis, 2013). This dissertation adopts a similar line of reasoning, and adds to the literature by demonstrating how intra party politics is relevant for aspects of parties’ programmatic strategies that previous work has left unexplored. Specifically, it is shown here that when the internal balance of power favours the leadership, parties behave more ‘office-oriented’ while a dominant activist base pushes parties towards more ‘policy-oriented’ election platforms.

Intra party democracy is considered crucial in modern democracies as it shapes and sustains the connection between society and government. Parties that are internally democratic empower their rank-and-file and provide them with opportunities to channel their demands into party policy decisions (Wolkenstein,

2015). Scholars of party politics have highlighted recent trends towards greater internal party democracy (Kernell, 2015, p.2). The results as presented in this dissertation suggest that such a reshaping of internal party organizational structures, in order to give party members and activists more of a say, will affect parties' programmatic issue strategies. Parties in which activists are powerful, the findings presented here suggest, are less concerned with the party system agenda than leadership-dominated parties and pursue core-vote strategies by confining the scope of their policy platforms. Whether policy-seeking or vote-seeking behaviour is desirable from a normative perspective, is up to debate. On the one hand, it is usually argued that parties' vote-seeking strategies produce optimal representation. Parties' responsiveness to preference shifts of the median voter ensures 'dynamic representation': parties adjust their programs in accordance with (aggregated) public opinion shifts (Stimson, MacKuen and Erikson, 1995). A contrasting view, however, holds that optimal representation is delivered when each party seeks to represent the views of its party supporters, because vote-seeking strategies will ultimately push all parties towards the dead centre of the political space (Laver, 2001, 2005). This argument implies that internally inclusive and policy-oriented parties outperform vote-seeking parties when it comes to producing representation for the electorate as a whole. In that case, the "representativeness of inter party politics is increased by enhancing the representativeness of intra party politics" (Laver, 2001, p.489).

Fourth, the findings in this dissertation have implications for our understanding of patterns of issue politicization. Scholars have increasingly turned their attention to the politicization of a 'second dimension' in politics. Although economic issues still feature prominently on party agendas in advanced democracies (Benoit and Laver, 2006), issues that belong to a second 'cultural' dimension have become more salient over time. The extent to which this issue domain has been politicized varies considerably: 'value-based' issues are more important to some parties than to others, and are more important in some election campaigns than in others. The consequences of the politicization of such issues have been extensively examined. An important line of argumentation posits that value-based issues 'distract' voters and divert their attention away from their economic interests, creating a situation in which poor people vote against redistributive economic policies (De La O and Rodden, 2008; Lefkofridi, Wagner and Willmann, 2014; Frank, 2004). Surprisingly, however, the backdrop against which such issues are being made salient in politics has received less scholarly attention (Tavits and Potter, 2015, p.744).

The present study addresses this. It shows that challengers are more likely to campaign on cultural issues. They do not only put forward value-based agendas, they simultaneously ignore shifts in the systemic salience of the economic issue domain. Challenger parties, it is suggested in this dissertation, drive the politicization of non-economic issues. A second contribution, in this regard, emerges from the fact that this dissertation compares 'bottom-up' and 'top-down' explanations of issue politicization. Although this dissertation locates itself within the



top-down perspective on politicization, building on the assumption that strategic politicians play a crucial role in the selection of salient issues, societal bottom-up explanations are also considered in the empirical models. The results imply that focusing events (i.e. the introduction of the Euro) and societal developments (i.e. the inflow of immigrants and GDP-growth) affect parties' attention to both cultural and economic issues. At the same time, this dissertation stresses how top-down factors (i.e. external party system pressures and internal organizational structures) determine issue salience decisions. The implication that both sets of explanations are relevant should guide future research on issue politicization.

Fifth, this study has implications for the ongoing debate on how established parties respond to the influx of new issues in party systems. The scholarly debate seems to revolve around the question whether established parties 'accommodate' or 'dismiss' the agendas of new competitors (Meguid, 2005, 2008). Empirical studies find evidence that parties pursue both strategies (Abou-Chadi, 2014; Spoon, Hobolt and de Vries, 2014). This dissertation adds to this literature in several ways. It broadens, first of all, the scope of inquiry by examining how mainstream parties change the scope of their agenda in response to increasing electoral support for challenger parties. Second, this dissertation theoretically argues and empirically shows how parties strategically respond when challenged by Eurosceptic party support, taking into account the possible effects of issue politicization on their expected electoral performance. Third, it highlights that it is important to conceptualize issue entrepreneurial strategies as consisting of two elements: a deviant policy position on an issue dimension in combination with a strong emphasis of that issue dimension. Only when Eurosceptic parties publicize their deviating stance strongly to voters, a contagious effect on the issue agendas of other parties is observed.

This latter finding has implications for studies that deal with 'extreme' or 'radical' parties. Parties that occupy outlying positions on issue dimensions, it is generally assumed, have an incentive to emphasize these issues in order to differentiate themselves and clearly communicate their 'extreme' position to voters (Wagner, 2012; Rovny, 2012). Related to this, this dissertation shows how challenger parties campaign on a focused and confined policy platform. At least with regard to the European integration issues, then, it is found that there are quite some parties that downplay their Eurosceptic position. Not all parties, it seems, are willing to emphasize outlying issue positions. Many far right parties, for example, initially campaigned on an anti-immigration platform but have increasingly shifted their focus towards their Eurosceptic position. Examples include the National Front (France) and the Freedom Party (the Netherlands). The findings presented here imply that such strategy adjustments on the part of challenger parties have far reaching consequences for patterns issue politicization and political competition in advanced democracies.

## 6.4 Suggestions for Future Research

This dissertation generates several questions that might be considered in future research on party behaviour and issue attention. Here, I briefly discuss three such avenues for future research that I believe carry particular weight.

First, this study isolates the effect of experience with government participation as a crucial factor affecting parties' programmatic strategies. However, it is important that we develop a more fine-grained understanding of this effect. The challenger-mainstream framework uses a rather harsh cut-off point to classify parties. Once a party has governed for the first time it ceases to be a challenger and turns into a mainstream party. This party classification captures a lot of the element that are implicitly assumed in the niche party concept but with greater parsimony and simplicity. That being said, it is likely that repeated spells in office have a different impact on parties than does incidental participation in a governing coalition. One possible way to address this would be to take into account the number of coalition governments a party has participated in, or the number of months the party was in government. Future research should specify further at which point the effect of office experience on policy platforms becomes apparent.

Second, it is crucial that we learn more about the role of intra party politics. Due to data limitations, this dissertation employs a time-invariant measure of parties' organizational structures. Future research should take up the challenge to collect more data on parties' internal workings. This could be done, for example, by collecting and coding documents stating party internal regulations. In addition, it would be insightful to collect more data on the programmatic preferences of party leaders and rank-and-file members. It is assumed in this study, as is in many other studies, that activists focus on policy-objectives whereas leaders are motivated primarily by office-objectives. Empirical evidence substantiating these claims is, however, relatively scarce. This should be taken up by future research. Important questions that should guide such an endeavour include the issue diversity preferences of both activists and leaders and their awareness of the issue appeals of competitor parties. This would shed light on the micro-foundations of the theoretical mechanism that is assumed in this study.

A third suggestion is to broaden the scope of inquiry when it comes to the different components of parties' issue attention strategies. By going beyond the idea of selective emphasis of preferred issues, new theoretical and empirical questions come to the fore. Building on the insights generated in this dissertation, future research should examine how parties respond to the issue appeals of competitors with regard to other new issues. Examples could include issues related to privacy and 'freedom of information'. Several new parties, operating under the label 'Pirate Party', have recently sought to make such issues salient in different European party systems. Furthermore, this study employs the agenda scope concept in order to grasp the issue attention diversity of individual parties. However, it would be insightful to assess the issue diversity at the party system level. This

could help to explain why some election campaigns tend towards issue competition (i.e. the struggle between parties over which issues should be discussed) whereas sometimes elections seem to be more about parties advocating different policy positions on a common set of issues (i.e. positional competition). Likewise, future research on the agenda component of issue attention strategies should focus on how aggregated policy agendas differ across party systems, and within party systems over time, and how this affects the incentives for parties to deviate from the agenda.

A

---

## Appendix Chapter 2

---

## List of Parties Included in the Empirical Analyses

The table below lists the parties that are included in the empirical analyses, including the party code as taken from the Party Manifesto data set (Volkens et al., 2014) and the range of election years (first-last) for which observations are included.

TABLE A.1 – List of Parties

Country	Party code	Party name	Election years (first-last)
Austria	42110	Green Alternative (The Greens)	1986-2008
Austria	42220	Austrian Communist Party	2002-2008
Austria	42320	Austrian Social Democratic Party	1953-2008
Austria	42420	Austrian Freedom Party (Freedom Movement) (League of Independents)	1953-2008
Austria	42421	Liberal Forum	1994-1995
Austria	42520	Austrian People's Party	1953-2008
Austria	42710	Alliance for the Future of Austria	2006-2008
Belgium	21111	Ecologists	1981-2010
Belgium	21112	Live Differently (Green!)	1981-2010
Belgium	21320	Belgian Socialist Party	1950-1977
Belgium	21321	Flemish Socialist Party (Socialist Party Different)	1978-2010
Belgium	21322	Francophone Socialist Party	1978-2010
Belgium	21420	Liberal Party (Party of Liberty and Progress)	1950-1968
Belgium	21421	(Open) Flemish Liberals and Democrats	1971-2010
Belgium	21422	Liberal Reformation Party (Party of Walloon Reform and Liberty)	1971-1995
Belgium	21424	Liberal Democratic and Pluralist Party	1971-1978
Belgium	21426	Reform Movement	1999-2010
Belgium	21430	List Dedecker	2007-2010
Belgium	21520	Francophone Christian Social Party (Flemish Christian People's Party)	1950-1965
Belgium	21521	Christian People's Party (Christian Democratic and Flemish)	1968-2010
Belgium	21522	Christian Social Party	1968-2010
Belgium	21911	Walloon Rally	1968-1981
Belgium	21912	Francophone Democratic Front	1965-1991
Belgium	21913	People's Union (Flemish Christian Peoples' Union) (People's Union - Complete Democracy for the 21st century)	1954-1999
Belgium	21914	Flemish Bloc (Flemish Interest)	1978-2010
Belgium	21916	New Flemish Alliance	2003-2010

(continued)

*(Table A.1 – continued)*

Country	Party code	Party name	Election years
Belgium	–	National Front	1991-2007
Belgium	–	Belgian Labour Party	1974-2010
Denmark	13001	(New) (Liberal) Alliance	2007-2010
Denmark	13210	Left Socialist Party	1968-1984
Denmark	13220	Danish Communist Party	1950-1984
Denmark	13229	Red-Green Unity List	1990-2011
Denmark	13230	Socialist People's Party	1960-2011
Denmark	13320	Social Democratic Party	1950-2011
Denmark	13330	Centre Democrats	1973-2005
Denmark	13410	Radical Party	1950-2011
Denmark	13420	Denmark's Liberal Party	1950-2011
Denmark	13421	Independents' Party	1953-1968
Denmark	13422	Liberal Centre	1966-1968
Denmark	13520	Christian People's Party	1971-2005
Denmark	13520	Conservative People's Party	1950-2011
Denmark	13720	Danish People's Party	1998-2011
Denmark	13951	Progress Party	1973-1998
Denmark	13952	Justice Party	1950-1984
Denmark	–	Greens	1987-1988
Finland	14110	Green Union	1983-2011
Finland	14221	Finnish People's Democratic Union	1951-1987
Finland	14223	Left Wing Alliance	1991-2011
Finland	14310	Social Democratic League of Workers and Smallholders	1958-1966
Finland	14320	Finnish Social Democrats	1951-2011
Finland	14420	Finnish People's Party (Liberal People's Party)	1951-1991
Finland	14520	Finnish Christian Union (Christian Democrats in Finland)	1970-2011
Finland	14620	National Coalition	1951-2011
Finland	14810	Centre Party (Finnish Centre) (Agrarian Union)	1951-2011
Finland	14820	Finnish Rural Party (True Finns)	1966-2011
Finland	14901	Swedish People's Party	1951-2011
Finland	–	League for Free Finland	1995–
Finland	–	Communist Party of Finland	2003-2007
France	31110	The Greens	1993-2007
France	31220	French Communist Party	1951-2007
France	31320	Socialist Party (French Section of the Workers' International)	1951-2007
France	31421	Radical Socialist Party	1951-1968
France	31521	Popular Republican Movement	1951-1962
France	31522	Democratic Centre (Progress and Modern Democracy) (Centre, Democracy and Progress)	1967-1973
France	31621	Union for a Popular Movement (Union for the Presidential Majority) (Rally for the Republic - Gaullists) (Union for the New Republic)	1951-2007

*(continued)*

(Table A.1 – continued)

Country	Party code	Party name	Election years
France	31622	National Centre of Independents and Peasants (Union for a New Majority - Conservatives)	1951-1988
France	31624	Union for French Democracy (Democartic Mouvement)	1978-2007
France	31720	National Front	1986-2007
France	–	Workers' Struggle	1973-2002
France	–	Revolutionary Communist League	2002-
France	–	National Republican Movement	2002-
Germany	41111	The Greens (Alliance '90 - The Greens)	1983-2013
Germany	41221	The Left (Party of Democratic Socialism)	1990-2013
Germany	41320	Social Democratic Party of Germany	1953-2013
Germany	41420	Free Democratic Party	1953-2013
Germany	41521	Christian Democratic Union - Christian Social Union	1953-2013
Germany	41620	German Party	1953-1957
Germany	–	German People's Union	1998-
Germany	–	The Republicans	1990-2002
Germany	–	National Democratic Party	1965-2013
Greece	34210	Communist Party of Greece	1974-2004
Greece	34211	Progressive Left Coalition (Coalition of the (Radical) Left, Movements and Ecology)	1989-2004
Greece	34313	Panhellenic Socialist Movement	1974-2004
Greece	34510	Centre Union (Union of the Democratic Centre)	1974-1977
Greece	34511	New Democracy	1974-2004
Greece	34512	Political Spring	1993-1996
Greece	–	Popular Orthodox Rally	2004-
Iceland	15111	Left Green Movement	1999-2009
Iceland	15220	People's Alliance (United Socialist Party)	1953-1995
Iceland	15320	Social Democratic Party	1953-1995
Iceland	15320	Union of Liberals and Leftists	1967-1974
Iceland	15320	The Alliance	1999-2009
Iceland	15420	Liberal Party	1999-2007
Iceland	15620	Independence Party	1953-2009
Iceland	15810	Progressive Party	1953-2009
Iceland	15951	Women's Alliance	1983-1995
Ireland	53110	Green Party	1989-2011
Ireland	53220	Workers' Party	1981-1989
Ireland	53221	Democratic Left Party	1992-1997
Ireland	53320	Labour Party	1951-2011
Ireland	53420	Progressive Democrats	1987-2007
Ireland	53520	Family of the Irish	1951-2011
Ireland	53620	Soldiers of Destiny	1951-2011
Ireland	53714	Republican Party	1951-1965
Ireland	53810	Party of the Land	1951-1961
Ireland	53951	Ourselves Alone	1982-2011
Italy	32061	People of Freedom	2008-2013

(continued)

(Table A.1 – continued)

Country	Party code	Party name	Election years
Italy	32110	Green Federation (Sunflower)	1987-2006
Italy	32210	Proletarian Unity Party for Communism (The Manifesto - Proletarian Unity Party)	1976-1983
Italy	32211	Proletarian Democracy	1983-1987
Italy	32212	Communist Refoundation Party	1992-2006
Italy	32213	Party of Italian Communists	2001-2006
Italy	32220	Italian Communist Party (Democratic Party of the Left)	1953-2001
Italy	32310	Radical Party (Pannella (-Riformatori) (-Sgarbi) List)	1976-1996
Italy	32320	Italian Socialist Party	1953-1994
Italy	32329	Olive Tree	2001-2006
Italy	32330	Italian Democratic Socialist Party	1953-1992
Italy	32410	Italian Republican Party	1953-1992
Italy	32420	Italian Liberal Party	1953-1992
Italy	32440	Democratic Party	2008-2013
Italy	32520	Christian Democrats (Italian Popular Party)	1953-1996
Italy	32521	Christian Democratic Centre (White Flower)	1996-2001
Italy	32529	Democratic Alliance	1994-1996
Italy	32530	Union for Christian and Center Democrats Union of the Center	2006-2013
Italy	32610	Go Italy	1994-2006
Italy	32611	New Italian Socialist Party	2001-2006
Italy	32710	Italian Social Movement (Italian Social Movement - National Right) (National Alliance)	1953-2006
Italy	32720	Northern League	1992-2013
Italy	32902	List Di Pietro - Italy of Values	2001-2008
Italy	32951	The Network - Movement for Democracy	1992-1994
Italy	–	Social Movement – Tricolour Flame	2008-
Luxembourg	23114	Green Alternative (Green Left Ecological Initiative - Green Alternative) (The Greens)	1984-2009
Luxembourg	23220	Communist Party	1951-1989
Luxembourg	23320	Socialist Workers' Party	1951-2009
Luxembourg	23420	Democratic Party (Democratic Group)	1951-2009
Luxembourg	23520	Christian Social People's Party	1951-2009
Luxembourg	23951	Action Committee for Democracy and Pension Justice (Alternative Democratic Reform Party)	1989-2009
The Netherlands	22110	Green Left	1989-2010
The Netherlands	22220	Socialist Party	1994-2010
The Netherlands	22310	Radical Political Party	1971-1986
The Netherlands	22320	Labour Party	1952-2010
The Netherlands	22330	Democrats '66	1967-2010
The Netherlands	22330	People's Party for Freedom and Democracy	1952-2010
The Netherlands	22430	Livable Netherlands	2002-2003

(continued)



*(Table A.1 – continued)*

Country	Party code	Party name	Election years
The Netherlands	22521	Christian Democratic Appeal	1977-2010
The Netherlands	22522	Catholic People's Party	1952-1972
The Netherlands	22523	Anti-Revolutionary Party	1952-1972
The Netherlands	22524	Democratic Socialists '70	1971-1977
The Netherlands	22525	Christian Historical Union	1952-1972
The Netherlands	22526	Christian Union	2002-2010
The Netherlands	22720	List Pim Fortuyn	2002-2003
The Netherlands	22722	Party for Freedom	2006-2010
The Netherlands	22951	Party for the Animals	2006-2010
The Netherlands	22952	Reformed Political Party	2006-2010
The Netherlands	-	Centre Democrats	1989-1998
Norway	12220	Norwegian Communist Party	1953-1957
Norway	12221	Socialist People's Party	1961-2009
Norway	12320	Norwegian Labour Party	1953-2009
Norway	12420	Liberal Party	1953-2009
Norway	12520	Christian People's Party	1953-2009
Norway	12620	Conservative Party	1953-2009
Norway	12810	Centre Party (Farmers' Party)	1953-2009
Norway	12951	Progress Party	1973-2009
Portugal	35110	Ecologist Party - 'The Greens'	1983-2011
Portugal	35210	Popular Democratic Union	1975-1987
Portugal	35211	Left Bloc	1999-2011
Portugal	35220	Portuguese Communist Party	1975-2011
Portugal	35229	Unified Democratic Coalition	1991-2005
Portugal	35310	Popular Democratic Movement	1975-1985
Portugal	35311	Socialist Party	1975-2011
Portugal	35312	Democratic Renewal Party	1975-1985
Portugal	35313	Popular Democratic Party	1975-2011
Portugal	35520	Social Democratic Center Party (Social Democratic Center - Popular Party)	1975-2011
Portugal	35710	Popular Monarchist Party	1976-1983
Spain	33220	Communist Party of Spain (United Left)	1977-2011
Spain	33320	Spanish Socialist Workers' Party	1977-2011
Spain	33430	Union of the Democratic Centre - Centrist Bloc	1977-1982
Spain	33438	Popular Democratic Party	1982-1986
Spain	33512	Centre Democrats	1982-1993
Spain	33610	Popular Alliance (Popular Party)	1977-2011
Spain	33611	Convergence and Union	1979-2011
Spain	33901	Basque Left	1977-1989
Spain	33902	Basque Nationalist Party	1977-2011
Spain	33903	Basque Solidarity	1989-2008
Spain	33904	Aragonese Regionalist Party	1977-2000
Spain	33905	Catalan Republican Left	1977-2011
Spain	33906	Andalusian Party	1977-2004
Spain	33907	Canarian Coalition	1993-2011
Spain	33908	Galician Nationalist Bloc	1996-2011
Spain	33909	Aragonist Council	2004-2008

*(continued)*

*(Table A.1 – continued)*

Country	Party code	Party name	Election years
Spain	33910	Navarrese People's Union	2004-2008
Spain	–	Initiative for Catalonia Greens	2000-2011
Sweden	11110	Green Ecology Party	1988-2010
Sweden	11220	Left (Communist) Party (Communist Party of Sweden)	1952-2010
Sweden	11320	Social Democratic Labour Party	1952-2010
Sweden	11420	(Liberal) People's Party	1952-2010
Sweden	11520	Christian Democrats (Christian Democratic Community Party) (Christian Democratic Coalition)	1985-2010
Sweden	11620	Moderate Coalition Party (Right Party)	1952-2010
Sweden	11810	Centre Party (Agrarian Party)	1952-2010
Sweden	117010	Sweden Democrats	2002-2010
Sweden	–	New Democracy	1991-1994
Switzerland	43110	Green Party of Switzerland (Federation of Green Parties)	1979-2007
Switzerland	43220	Swiss Labour Party	1991-2007
Switzerland	43320	Social Democratic Party of Switzerland	1951-2007
Switzerland	43321	Independents' Alliance	1951-1999
Switzerland	43420	Radical Democratic Party	1951-2007
Switzerland	43520	Christian Democratic People's Party of Switzerland (Conservative Christian Social Party) (Conservative People's Party)	1951-2007
Switzerland	43530	Protestant People's Party of Switzerland	1971-2007
Switzerland	43531	Liberal Party of Switzerland	1991-2003
Switzerland	43710	Swiss Democrats (National Action for People and Fatherland)	1971-2003
Switzerland	43711	Federal Democratic Union	1991-2007
Switzerland	43810	Swiss People's Party (Farmers', Traders' and Citizens' Party)	1951-2007
Switzerland	43951	Swiss Motorists' Party (Freedom Party of Switzerland)	1987-2003
Switzerland	-	National Action for People and Fatherland (Swiss Democrats)	1967-2007
United Kingdom	51210	Ourselves Alone	1997-2001
United Kingdom	51320	Labour Party	1950-2010
United Kingdom	51420	Liberal Party (Liberal Democrats)	1950-2010
United Kingdom	51420	Ulster Unionist Party	1950-2010
United Kingdom	51621	Conservative Party	1992-2001
United Kingdom	51902	Scottish National Party	1992-2001
United Kingdom	51903	Democratic Unionist Party	1992-2001
United Kingdom	–	Green Party	1987-2010
United Kingdom	–	United Kingdom Independence Party	2001-2010
United Kingdom	–	British National Party	2010–

B

---

## Appendix Chapter 3

---

## Results of Granger Reverse Causality Analyses

The table below reports the results of the reverse Granger causality models. The full models as presented in chapter 3 (models 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12) are re-estimated using the dependent variable at  $t - 1$  to predict the dependent variable at time  $t$ . The table reports the coefficient estimates and panel-corrected standard errors for the effect of the dependent variable (party issue emphasis on the economic or cultural issue domain) at  $t - 1$  on the independent variable (systemic salience) at  $t$ . The negative signs of the estimated coefficients weakens the case of reverse causality and implies that reverse causality, in fact, constitutes a bias against the positive estimates as reported in the models in chapter 3.

TABLE B.1 – Granger Reverse Causality Models

	$\beta$	pcse	sig.
<b>Model 2</b>			
(DV: $\Delta$ Systemic salience cultural issues <sub><i>t</i></sub> )			
$\Delta$ Salience cultural issues <sub><i>t-1</i></sub>	-0.0283	0.0110	**
<b>Model 4</b>			
(DV: $\Delta$ Systemic salience economic issues <sub><i>t</i></sub> )			
$\Delta$ Salience economic issues <sub><i>t-1</i></sub>	-0.0336	0.0071	***
<b>Model 6</b>			
(DV: $\Delta$ Systemic salience cultural issues <sub><i>t</i></sub> )			
$\Delta$ Salience cultural issues <sub><i>t-1</i></sub>	-0.0718	0.0121	***
<b>Model 8</b>			
(DV: $\Delta$ Systemic economic cultural issues <sub><i>t</i></sub> )			
$\Delta$ Salience economic issues <sub><i>t-1</i></sub>	-0.0575	0.0105	***
<b>Model 10</b>			
(DV: $\Delta$ Systemic salience cultural issues <sub><i>t</i></sub> )			
$\Delta$ Salience cultural issues <sub><i>t-1</i></sub>	-0.0214	0.0160	
<b>Model 12</b>			
(DV: $\Delta$ Systemic salience economic issues <sub><i>t</i></sub> )			
$\Delta$ Salience economic issues <sub><i>t-1</i></sub>	-0.0286	0.0138	**
Controls & country fixed effects			

Note: Prais-Winsten regression coefficients and panel-corrected standard errors. \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$  (two-tailed tests).

## Results of Models with Vote-Weighted Systemic Saliency Variable (I)

The tables below report the results of a re-estimation of all the models including a vote-weighted measure of the systemic saliency variable. The substantive results do not differ from those reported in chapter 3.

TABLE B.2 – Models 1-4 Re-Estimated with Vote-Weighted Systemic Saliency ( $w$ )

	<b>Model 1</b> <i>cultural</i> <i>issues</i>	<b>Model 2</b> <i>cultural</i> <i>issues</i>	<b>Model 3</b> <i>economic</i> <i>issues</i>	<b>Model 4</b> <i>economic</i> <i>issues</i>
(Constant)	−0.1767 (0.4509)	0.3325 (0.7253)	0.0664 (0.1982)	1.9001** (0.9492)
$\Delta$ Systemic saliency ( $w$ )	0.0073*** (0.0013)	0.0131*** (0.0016)	0.0104*** (0.0012)	0.0127*** (0.0015)
Challenger Party (CP)	−0.9048*** (0.2291)	−0.6592*** (0.2243)	0.2758 (0.2058)	0.0619 (0.4449)
CP $\times$ $\Delta$ Systemic saliency ( $w$ )	−0.0053*** (0.0015)	−0.0135*** (0.0019)	−0.0094*** (0.0014)	−0.0121*** (0.0019)
Party size		0.0068 (0.0117)		−0.0115 (0.0153)
Ideological extremity		−0.4636*** (0.1341)		0.1091 (0.1465)
Vote difference		0.0228 (0.0309)		0.1366*** (0.0523)
GDP		0.1414*** (0.0374)		−0.2534*** (0.0718)
N	1545	937	1545	1003
Wald	92.9795	2922.0098	131.4107	177.0499

Note: Prais-Winsten regression coefficients with panel-corrected standard errors in parentheses and country dummies (not shown in table). \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$  (two-tailed tests).

## Results of Models with Vote-Weighted Systemic Saliency Variable (II)

TABLE B.3 – Models 5-8 Re-Estimated with Vote-Weighted Systemic Saliency ( $w$ )

	<b>Model 5</b> <i>cultural</i> <i>issues</i>	<b>Model 6</b> <i>cultural</i> <i>issues</i>	<b>Model 7</b> <i>economic</i> <i>issues</i>	<b>Model 8</b> <i>economic</i> <i>issues</i>
(Constant)	−0.8377* (0.4866)	0.4759 (1.3467)	0.3757 (0.2806)	3.3118** (1.4893)
$\Delta$ Systemic saliency ( $w$ )	0.0074*** (0.0014)	0.0121*** (0.0019)	0.0123*** (0.0009)	0.0136*** (0.0020)
Mainstream Opposition Party (MOP)	0.5787* (0.3463)	1.1830** (0.4931)	−0.6203 (0.3779)	−0.8924* (0.5364)
MOP $\times$ $\Delta$ Systemic saliency ( $w$ )	−0.0011 (0.0020)	−0.0017 (0.0028)	−0.0028 (0.0019)	−0.0021 (0.0027)
Party size		−0.0086 (0.0170)		−0.0066 (0.0185)
Ideological extremity		−0.0446 (0.2031)		−0.0697 (0.2088)
Vote difference		0.0303 (0.0558)		0.1522** (0.0631)
GDP		0.1469 (0.0947)		−0.4561*** (0.1099)
N	993	647	993	696
Wald	101.8073	126.2968	500.8608	150.4690

Note: Prais-Winsten regression coefficients with panel-corrected standard errors in parentheses and country dummies (not shown in table). \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$  (two-tailed tests).

### Results of Models with Vote-Weighted Systemic Salience Variable (III)

TABLE B.4 – Models 9-12 Re-Estimated with Vote-Weighted Systemic Salience ( $w$ )

	<b>Model 9</b> <i>cultural</i> <i>issues</i>	<b>Model 10</b> <i>cultural</i> <i>issues</i>	<b>Model 11</b> <i>economic</i> <i>issues</i>	<b>Model 12</b> <i>economic</i> <i>issues</i>
(Constant)	−0.0413 (1.0973)	1.0535 (1.3282)	−0.1095 (0.9336)	1.2206 (1.5304)
$\Delta$ Systemic salience ( $w$ )	0.0107** (0.0046)	0.0198*** (0.0055)	0.0024 (0.0030)	0.0018 (0.0031)
Intra Party Balance of Power (IPBP)	0.0508 (0.0364)	0.0332 (0.0396)	−0.0071 (0.0266)	0.0407 (0.0438)
IPBP $\times$ $\Delta$ Systemic salience ( $w$ )	−0.0002 (0.0003)	−0.0004 (0.0003)	0.0003** (0.0002)	0.0004** (0.0002)
Challenger Party (CP)	−0.7726* (0.4014)	−0.2971 (0.5600)	0.3260 (0.3330)	0.9588* (0.5679)
Party size		−0.0021 (0.0194)		−0.0045 (0.0191)
Ideological extremity		−0.1621 (0.2042)		−0.0268 (0.1841)
Vote difference		0.0080 (0.0518)		0.1241** (0.0558)
GDP		0.0253 (0.1086)		−0.3318*** (0.1044)
N	1226	816	1226	874
Wald	60.8964	225.8244	75.5240	83.1064

Note: Prais-Winsten regression coefficients with panel-corrected standard errors in parentheses and country dummies (not shown in table). \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$  (two-tailed tests).

C

---

## Appendix Chapter 4

---



## Re-Estimation of Models 1-4 with Log-Transformations

The variables vote loss, party size and ideological extremity are skewed to the right. Therefore, models 1-4 are re-estimated using log-transformations of these variables. The results of the analyses do not differ substantively from those reported in chapter 4.

TABLE C.1 – Models 1-4 Re-Estimated with Log-Transformations

	<b>Model 1</b>	<b>Model 2</b>	<b>Model 3</b> <i>mainstream parties</i>	<b>Model 4</b> <i>mainstream parties</i>
(Constant)	14.7308*** (1.0294)	15.5847*** (1.1261)	15.5578*** (1.1135)	15.6729*** (1.3123)
Challenger Party (CP)	-1.1033*** (0.2724)	-2.5152*** (0.7556)		
Mainstream Government Party (MGP)			0.1464 (0.2156)	-0.2515 (0.9002)
Vote loss ( <i>log</i> )	0.1503 (0.1043)	0.1422 (0.1065)	-0.1044 (0.1418)	-0.0909 (0.1428)
Intra party balance of power	-0.0110 (0.0172)	-0.0591* (0.0337)	0.0657** (0.0268)	0.0599 (0.0474)
Party size ( <i>log</i> )	0.7216*** (0.1489)	0.7246*** (0.1535)	-0.0266 (0.2147)	-0.0326 (0.2142)
Ideological extremity ( <i>log</i> )	-1.4530*** (0.2504)	-1.4463*** (0.2537)	-0.7046* (0.3627)	-0.7106* (0.3666)
CP × Intra party balance of power		0.0792* (0.0405)		
MGP × Intra party balance of power				0.0228 (0.0485)
N	999	999	717	717
Wald	12513.5850	4929.2980	2436.0683	2607.4429

Note: Prais-Winsten regression coefficients with panel-corrected standard errors in parentheses and country dummies (not shown in table). \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$  (two-tailed tests). A log-transformation of the variables vote loss, party size and ideological extremity is used.

## Re-Estimation of Models 5-8 with Log-Transformations

The dependent variable, absolute change in issue attention diversity, and the independent variable strength of challenger parties are skewed to the right. Therefore, models 5-8 are re-estimated using log-transformations of these variables. The results of the analyses do not differ substantively from those reported in chapter 4.

TABLE C.2 – Models 5-8 Re-Estimated with Log-Transformations

	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8
(Constant)	1.5365*** (0.1171)	1.7163*** (0.1096)	1.6050*** (0.1151)	1.3270*** (0.1528)
Office exclusion	0.0612** (0.0301)	-0.2295*** (0.0581)	0.0632** (0.0295)	0.0546* (0.0295)
Vote loss	-0.0164 (0.0211)	-0.0091 (0.0182)	-0.1038*** (0.0398)	-0.0191 (0.0205)
Strength challengers ( <i>log</i> )	-0.0225 (0.0191)	-0.0255 (0.0181)	-0.0188 (0.0190)	0.0736 (0.0511)
Intra party balance of powers (IPBP)	-0.0055 (0.0040)	-0.0152*** (0.0032)	-0.0098** (0.0039)	0.0065 (0.0071)
IPBP×Office exclusion		0.0161*** (0.0031)		
IPBP×Vote loss			0.0052** (0.0024)	
IPBP×Strength challengers ( <i>log</i> )				-0.0057* (0.0031)
N	864	864	864	864
Wald	170.6607	307.9854	170.6607	173.5822

Note: Prais-Winsten regression coefficients with panel-corrected standard errors in parentheses and country dummies (not shown in table). \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$  (two-tailed tests). A log-transformation of the dependent variable, absolute change in issue attention diversity, as well as of the independent variables vote loss and strength of challenger parties is used.

D

---

## Appendix Chapter 5

---

## Regression Models with Interaction Terms

The table reports the models including the interaction terms between the variable indicating support for issue entrepreneurs and the average salience issue entrepreneurs attach to ‘their’ issues.

TABLE D.1 – Regression Models Predicting Party Emphases of Green, Immigration and European Integration Issues (Interactive Models)

	<b>Model 1</b> <i>Green issues</i> <i>CMP data</i>	<b>Model 2</b> <i>Immigration issues</i> <i>CMP data</i>	<b>Model 3</b> <i>EU issues</i> <i>CHES data</i>
Green Party Support <sub><i>t</i>-1</sub>	-0.022** (0.008)		
Mean Green Issue Salience Green Parties	0.011 (0.017)		
Green Party Support <sub><i>t</i>-1</sub> × Mean Green Issue Salience Green Parties	0.005 (0.008)		
Far Right Party Support <sub><i>t</i>-1</sub>		0.006 (0.004)	
Mean Immigration Salience Far Right Parties		0.074 (0.075)	
Far Right Party Support <sub><i>t</i>-1</sub> × Mean Immigration Salience Far Right Parties		0.005 (0.008)	
Eurosceptic Party Support <sub><i>t</i>-1</sub>			-0.063*** (0.019)
Mean EU Issue Salience Eurosceptic Parties			0.016 (0.022)
Eurosceptic Party Support <sub><i>t</i>-1</sub> × Mean EU Issue Salience Eurosceptic Parties			0.032*** (0.007)
Incumbent Party	0.017 (0.025)	-0.028 (0.044)	0.045 (0.051)
Party Size	0.003 (0.002)	0.006 (0.006)	-0.005 (0.005)
GDP	0.004 (0.005)	0.016* (0.009)	-0.013** (.006)
Chernobyl	0.157*** (0.025)		
Immigration rate ( <i>log</i> )		0.025 (0.018)	
Euro			0.292*** (0.045)
(Constant)	-0.056 (0.088)	-0.017 (0.253)	1.759*** (0.101)
<i>N</i>	717	607	756
<i>Party Clusters</i>	146	130	135
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.655	0.577	0.504

*Note:* Prais-Winsten regression coefficients with robust standard errors clustered by party in parentheses and party dummy fixed effects (not shown in table). \*\*\**p* < 0.01, \*\**p* < 0.05, \**p* < 0.1 (two-tailed tests). The dependent variables capture the importance of green, immigration and EU issues to parties at *t*<sub>0</sub> measured on a 0-4 scale using party manifesto data (model 1 & 2) and expert survey data (model 3).

### Re-estimation of Model 3 using CMP data

I re-estimate model 3 (predicting parties' issue attention to EU issues) using party manifesto data. The results do not differ substantively from the models using expert survey data, as presented in chapter 5.

TABLE D.2 – Model 3 Re-Estimated with CMP Data

	<b>Model 3</b> <i>EU issues</i> <i>CMP data</i>
<b>Eurosceptic Party Support<sub>t-1</sub></b>	<b>0.011**</b> <b>(0.006)</b>
Incumbent Party	0.033 (0.037)
Party Size	−0.004 (0.004)
GDP	0.006 (0.007)
Euro	−0.074* (0.038)
(Constant)	0.377* (0.177)
<i>N</i>	680
<i>Party Clusters</i>	124
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.273

*Note:* Prais-Winsten regression coefficients with robust standard errors clustered by party in parentheses and party dummy fixed effects (not shown in table). \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$  (two-tailed tests). The dependent variable captures the importance of EU issues to parties at  $t_0$  measured on a 0–4 scale using party manifesto data.

## Regression Models for Mainstream Parties Only (I)

The table below present the results of models 1-3 re-estimated for a subset of mainstream parties only. The results do not differ substantively from the models presented in chapter 5, which also include non-mainstream parties.

TABLE D.3 – Regression Models Predicting Mainstream Party Emphases of Green, Immigration and European Integration Issues

	<b>Model 1</b> <i>Green issues</i> <i>CMP data</i>	<b>Model 2</b> <i>Immigration issues</i> <i>CMP data</i>	<b>Model 3</b> <i>EU issues</i> <i>CHES data</i>
<b>Green Party Support<sub>t-1</sub></b>	<b>−0.016***</b> (0.004)		
<b>Far Right Party Support<sub>t-1</sub></b>		<b>0.012*</b> (0.006)	
<b>Eurosceptic Party Support<sub>t-1</sub></b>			<b>0.020*</b> (0.011)
Incumbent Party	0.005 (0.025)	−0.042 (0.043)	0.004 (0.064)
Party Size	0.002 (0.002)	0.007 (0.008)	−0.006 (0.005)
GDP	0.005 (0.005)	0.014* (0.008)	−0.010 (0.007)
Chernobyl	0.130*** (0.018)		
Immigration rate ( <i>log</i> )		0.074*** (0.022)	
Euro			0.383*** (0.059)
(Constant)	0.0000 (0.078)	−0.160 (0.336)	2.522*** (0.168)
<i>N</i>	577	431	414
<i>Mainstream Party Clusters</i>	92	85	67
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.479	0.315	0.3193

*Note:* Prais-Winsten regression coefficients with robust standard errors clustered by mainstream party in parentheses and party dummy fixed effects (not shown in table). \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$  (two-tailed tests). The dependent variables capture the importance of green, immigration and EU issues to parties at  $t_0$  measured on a 0-4 scale using party manifesto data (model 1 & 2) and expert survey data (model 3).

## Regression Models for Mainstream Parties Only (II)

Models 1-3 re-estimated for a subset of mainstream parties only, including the interaction terms.

TABLE D.4 – Regression Models Predicting Mainstream Party Emphases of Green, Immigration and European Integration Issues (Interactive Models)

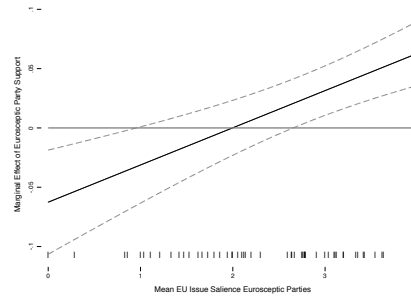
	<b>Model 1</b> <i>Green issues</i> <i>CMP data</i>	<b>Model 2</b> <i>Immigration issues</i> <i>CMP data</i>	<b>Model 3</b> <i>EU issues</i> <i>CHES data</i>
Green Party Support <sub><i>t</i>-1</sub>	-0.021** (0.010)		
Mean Green Issue Salience Green Parties	0.018 (0.019)		
Green Party Support <sub><i>t</i>-1</sub> × Mean Green Issue Salience Green Parties	0.004 (0.010)		
Far Right Party Support <sub><i>t</i>-1</sub>		0.005 (0.005)	
Mean Immigration Salience Far Right Parties		0.048 (0.060)	
Far Right Party Support <sub><i>t</i>-1</sub> × Mean Immigration Salience Far Right Parties		0.010 (0.007)	
Eurosceptic Party Support <sub><i>t</i>-1</sub>			-0.063*** (0.022)
Mean EU Issue Salience Eurosceptic Parties			0.003 (0.026)
Eurosceptic Party Support <sub><i>t</i>-1</sub> × Mean EU Issue Salience Eurosceptic Parties			0.031*** (0.007)
Incumbent Party	0.011 (0.027)	-0.048 (0.050)	-0.003 (0.059)
Party Size	0.003 (0.002)	0.008 (0.007)	-0.006 (0.005)
GDP	0.007 (0.005)	0.014* (0.008)	-0.009 (0.007)
Chernobyl	0.147*** (0.022)		
Immigration rate ( <i>log</i> )		0.064** (0.020)	
Euro			0.275*** (0.058)
(Constant)	-0.067 (0.092)	-0.172 (0.285)	2.571*** (0.166)
<i>N</i>	510	431	414
<i>Mainstream Party Clusters</i>	92	85	67
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.489	0.448	0.371

*Note:* Prais-Winsten regression coefficients with robust standard errors clustered by mainstream party in parentheses and party dummy fixed effects (not shown in table). \*\*\**p* < 0.01, \*\**p* < 0.05, \**p* < 0.1 (two-tailed tests). The dependent variables capture the importance of green, immigration and EU issues to parties at *t*<sub>0</sub> measured on a 0-4 scale using party manifesto data (model 1 & 2) and expert survey data (model 3).

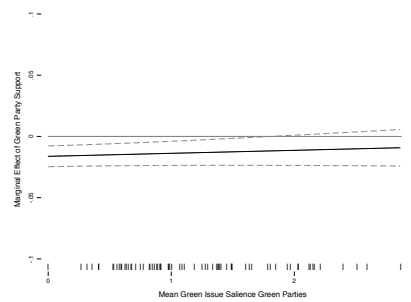
## Regression Models Mainstream Parties Only (Marginal Effects Plots)

The figures below present the marginal effects plots for the interactive models including a subset of mainstream parties only. The interpretation of the marginal effects is substantively similar to the plots presented in chapter 5.

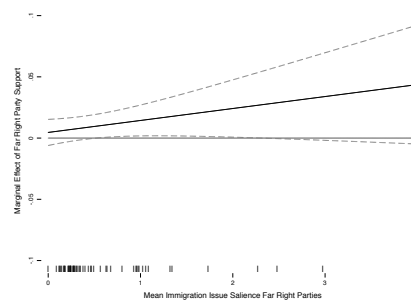
FIGURE D.1 – Marginal Effects of Support for Issue Entrepreneurs on Mainstream Parties' Issue Emphases



(a) EU issues



(b) Green issues



(c) Immigration issues

*Note:* The figures show marginal effect plots with 95% confidence intervals. The rug plots indicate individual observations for the conditioning variable.



### Model 3 Re-Estimated Controlling for Intra-Party Dissent (I)

The table below report the results of a re-estimation of model 3 (predicting attention to EU issues) including controls for intra-party dissent on the issue. The results, as presented in chapter 5, are robust to the inclusion of this control variable.

TABLE D.5 – Model 3 Re-Estimated Controlling for Intra-Party Dissent

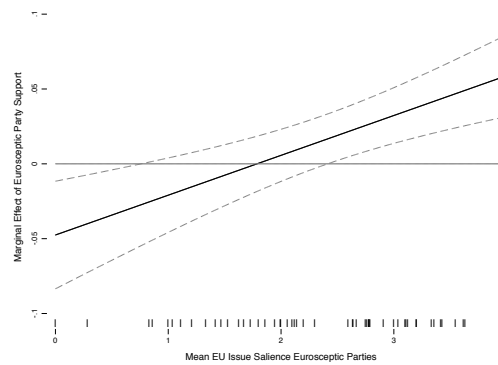
	<b>Model 3</b> <i>EU issues</i> <i>CMP data</i>	<b>Model 3</b> <i>EU issues</i> <i>CMP data</i> <i>(Interactive model)</i>
Eurosceptic Party Support <sub><i>t</i>-1</sub>	0.022*** (0.008)	-0.048** 0.018
Mean EU Issue Salience Eurosceptic Parties		0.006 (0.023)
Eurosceptic Party Support <sub><i>t</i>-1</sub> × Mean EU Issue Salience Eurosceptic Parties		0.027*** (0.007)
Intra-Party Dissent	0.620** (0.242)	0.568** (0.236)
Intra-Party Dissent <sup>2</sup>	-0.058 (0.045)	-0.063 (0.044)
Incumbent Party	0.076 (0.055)	0.062 (0.050)
Party Size	-0.006 (0.006)	-0.005 (0.005)
GDP	-0.006 (0.006)	-0.007 (0.006)
Euro	0.261*** (0.059)	0.202*** (0.006)
(Constant)	0.600* (0.347)	0.791** (0.335)
<i>N</i>	754	754
<i>Party Clusters</i>	135	135
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.512	0.535

*Note:* Prais-Winsten regression coefficients with robust standard errors clustered by party in parentheses and party dummy fixed effects (not shown in table). \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$  (two-tailed tests). The dependent variable captures the importance of EU issues to parties at  $t_0$  measured on a 0-4 scale using expert survey data.

### Model 3 Re-Estimated Controlling for Intra-Party Dissent (Marginal Effects Plot)

The figure below, based on table D.5, presents the marginal effects plot for the interactive model 3 including a control variable for intra-party dissent on European Union issues. The interpretation of the marginal effects is substantively similar to the plot presented in chapter 5.

FIGURE D.2 – Marginal Effects Plot (EU model Including Intra-Party Dissent))



*Note:* The figure shows the marginal effect plot with 95% confidence intervals. The rug plot indicates individual observations for the conditioning variable.

### Re-Estimation of Models 1-2 with Log-Transformations

The measures for green issue salience (the dependent variable in model 1) and immigration issue salience (the dependent variable in model 2) as well as all three the conditioning variables in the interactive models are skewed to the right. There, I re-estimate models 1 and 2 as well as all three the interactive models using log-transformations of these variables. The results of these analyses, presented below, do not differ substantively from those reported in chapter 5.

TABLE D.6 – Regression Models Predicting Party Emphases of Green, Immigration and European Integration Issues (Log-Transformed Models)

	<b>Model 1</b> <i>Green issues</i> <i>CMP data</i>	<b>Model 2</b> <i>Immigration issues</i> <i>CMP data</i>
<b>Green Party Support<sub>t-1</sub></b>	<b>-0.012***</b> (0.003)	
<b>Far Right Party Support<sub>t-1</sub></b>		<b>0.007**</b> (0.003)
Incumbent Party	0.008 (0.017)	-0.007 (0.024)
Party Size	0.002 (0.001)	0.003 (0.004)
GDP	0.001 (0.003)	0.009* (0.005)
Chernobyl	0.112*** (0.012)	
Immigration rate ( <i>log</i> )		0.023* (0.012)
(Constant)	0.020 (0.053)	0.069 (0.180)
<i>N</i>	810	609
<i>Party Clusters</i>	146	130
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.594	0.465

*Note:* Prais-Winsten regression coefficients with robust standard errors clustered by party in parentheses and party dummy fixed effects (not shown in table). \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$  (two-tailed tests). The dependent variables capture the importance of green and immigration to parties at  $t_0$  measured on a 0-4 scale using party manifesto data. Both dependent variables are log-transformed.

## Re-estimation of Interactive Models 1-3 with Log-Transformations

The table below shows the interactive models 1-3 re-estimated using log-transformations.

TABLE D.7 – Regression Models Predicting Party Emphases of Green, Immigration and European Integration Issues (Interactive Models with Log-Transformations)

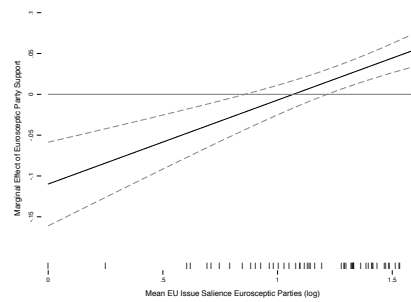
	<b>Model 1</b> <i>Green issues</i> <i>CMP data</i>	<b>Model 2</b> <i>Immigration issues</i> <i>CMP data</i>	<b>Model 3</b> <i>EU issues</i> <i>CHES data</i>
Green Party Support <sub>t-1</sub>	-0.013* (0.007)		
Mean Green Issue Salience Green Parties (log)	0.018 (0.024)		
Green Party Support <sub>t-1</sub> × Mean Green Issue Salience Green Parties (log)	-0.001 (0.009)		
Far Right Party Support <sub>t-1</sub>		0.002 (0.003)	
Mean Immigration Salience Far Right Parties (log)		0.087 (0.071)	
Far Right Party Support <sub>t-1</sub> × Mean Immigration Salience Far Right Parties (log)		0.008 (0.009)	
Eurosceptic Party Support <sub>t-1</sub>			-0.110*** (0.026)
Mean EU Issue Salience Eurosceptic Parties (log)			0.008 (0.049)
Eurosceptic Party Support <sub>t-1</sub> × Mean EU Issue Salience Eurosceptic Parties (log)			0.103*** (0.020)
Incumbent Party	0.013 (0.018)	-0.005 (0.026)	0.045 (0.051)
Party Size	0.002 (0.002)	0.003 (0.004)	-0.005 (0.005)
GDP	0.003 (0.003)	0.010* (0.005)	-0.014** (0.006)
Chernobyl	0.121*** (0.018)		
Immigration rate (log)		0.021* (0.012)	
Euro			0.283*** (0.046)
(Constant)	-0.018 (0.066)	0.059 (0.158)	1.824*** (0.102)
<i>N</i>	717	607	756
<i>Party Clusters</i>	146	130	135
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.602	0.526	0.506

Note: Prais-Winsten regression coefficients with robust standard errors clustered by party in parentheses and party dummy fixed effects (not shown in table). \*\*\**p* < 0.01, \*\**p* < 0.05, \**p* < 0.1 (two-tailed tests). A log-transformation of the variables mean green (immigration) (EU) issue salience green (far right) (Eurosceptic) parties is used. In models 1 and 2, the dependent variable is also log-transformed.

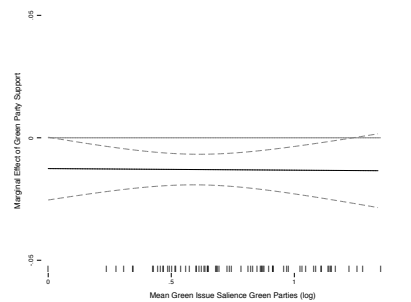
## Re-Estimation of Models 1-3 with Log-Transformations (Marginal Effects Plots)

The figures below present the marginal effects plots for the interactive models using the log-transformed variables. The interpretation of the marginal effects is substantively similar to the plots presented in chapter 5.

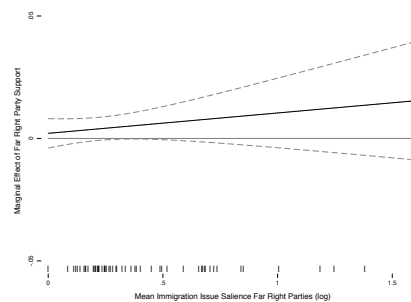
FIGURE D.3 – Marginal Effects of Support for Issue Entrepreneurs on Other Parties' Issue Emphases (Log-Transformed Models)



(a) EU issues



(b) Green issues



(c) Immigration issues

*Note:* The figures show marginal effect plots with 95% confidence intervals. The rug plots indicate individual observations for the conditioning variable.

## Regression Models with Lagged Dependent Variables (I)

The table below present the results of models 1-3 re-estimated including lagged dependent variables (LDVs) and panel-corrected standard errors (PSCEs). The results do not differ substantively from the models presented in chapter 5.

TABLE D.8 – Regression Models Predicting Party Emphases of Green, Immigration and European Integration Issues (Models with Lagged Dependent Variables)

	<b>Model 1</b> <i>Green issues</i> <i>CMP data</i>	<b>Model 2</b> <i>Immigration issues</i> <i>CMP data</i>	<b>Model 3</b> <i>EU issues</i> <i>CHES data</i>
<b>Green Party Support<sub>t-1</sub></b>	<b>-0.016***</b> <b>(0.004)</b>		
<b>Far Right Party Support<sub>t-1</sub></b>		<b>0.013***</b> <b>(0.004)</b>	
<b>Eurosceptic Party Support<sub>t-1</sub></b>			<b>0.016*</b> <b>(0.009)</b>
Lagged Dependent Variable	0.037 (0.123)	0.095 (0.145)	0.371* (0.205)
Controls & Party Dummy Fixed Effects			
<i>N</i>	717	717	622
<i>Party Clusters</i>	146	146	134
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.646	0.513	0.712

*Note:* Regression coefficients with panel-corrected standard errors in parentheses and party dummy fixed effects (not shown in table). \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$  (two-tailed tests). The dependent variables capture the importance of green, immigration and EU issues to parties at  $t_0$  measured on a 0-4 scale using party manifesto data (model 1 & 2) and expert survey data (model 3).

## Regression Models with Lagged Dependent Variables (II)

Models 1-3 re-estimated with lagged dependent variables and panel-corrected standard errors, including the interaction terms.

TABLE D.9 – Regression Models Predicting Party Emphases of Green, Immigration and European Integration Issues (Interactive Models with Lagged Dependent Variables)

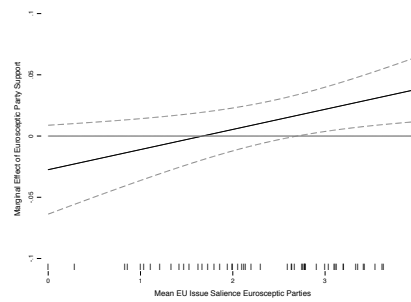
	<b>Model 1</b> <i>Green issues</i> <i>CMP data</i>	<b>Model 2</b> <i>Immigration issues</i> <i>CMP data</i>	<b>Model 3</b> <i>EU issues</i> <i>CHES data</i>
Green Party Support <sub><i>t</i>-1</sub>	-0.021** (0.008)		
Mean Green Issue Salience Green Parties	0.010 (0.015)		
Green Party Support <sub><i>t</i>-1</sub> × Mean Green Issue Salience Green Parties	0.005 (0.008)		
Far Right Party Support <sub><i>t</i>-1</sub>		0.005 (0.004)	
Mean Immigration Salience Far Right Parties		0.062 (0.099)	
Far Right Party Support <sub><i>t</i>-1</sub> × Mean Immigration Salience Far Right Parties		0.008 (0.010)	
Eurosceptic Party Support <sub><i>t</i>-1</sub>			-0.027 (0.019)
Mean EU Issue Salience Eurosceptic Parties			0.018 (0.034)
Eurosceptic Party Support <sub><i>t</i>-1</sub> × Mean EU Issue Salience Eurosceptic Parties			0.016** (0.007)
Lagged Dependent Variable	0.028 (0.131)	0.005 (0.134)	0.343* (0.199)
Controls & Party Dummy Fixed Effects			
<i>N</i>	717	717	622
<i>Party Clusters</i>	146	146	134
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.648	0.540	0.722

*Note:* Regression coefficients with panel-corrected standard errors in parentheses and party dummy fixed effects (not shown in table). \*\*\**p* < 0.01, \*\**p* < 0.05, \**p* < 0.1 (two-tailed tests). The dependent variables capture the importance of green, immigration and EU issues to parties at *t*<sub>0</sub> measured on a 0-4 scale using party manifesto data (model 1 & 2) and expert survey data (model 3).

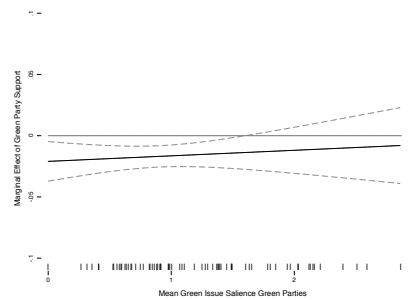
## Regression Models with Lagged Dependent Variables (Marginal Effects Plots)

The figures below present the marginal effects plots for the interactive models including the lagged dependent variables. The interpretation of the marginal effects is substantively similar to the plots presented in chapter 5.

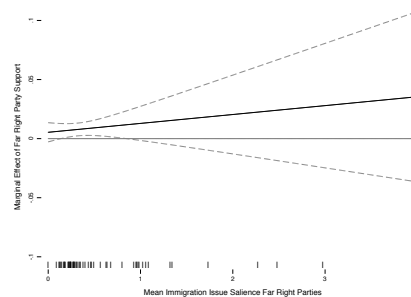
FIGURE D.4 – Marginal Effects of Support for Issue Entrepreneurs on Other Parties' Issue Emphases (Models with Lagged Dependent Variables)



(a) EU issues



(b) Green issues



(c) Immigration issues

*Note:* The figures show marginal effect plots with 95% confidence intervals. The rug plots indicate individual observations for the conditioning variable.



---

## Bibliography

---

- Abou-Chadi, Tarik. 2014. "Niche Party Success and Mainstream Party Policy Shifts — How Green and Radical Right Parties Differ in Their Impact." *British Journal of Political Science* FirstView:1–20.  
**URL:** [doi:10.1017/S0007123414000155](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123414000155)
- Achen, Christopher H. 2000. "Why Lagged Dependent Variables Can Suppress the Explanatory Power Other Independent Variables." *APSA 2000 (Political Methodology Section) Annual Meeting Paper* .  
**URL:** <http://www.polmeth.wustl.edu/media/Paper/achen00.pdf>
- Adams, Greg D. 1997. "Abortion: Evidence of an Issue Evolution." *American Journal of Political Science* 41(3):718–737.
- Adams, James. 2016. "On the Relationship between (Parties' and Voters') Issue Attention and their Issue Positions: Response to Dowding, Hindmoor and Martin." *Journal of Public Policy* 36(1):25–31.
- Adams, James, Lawrence Ezrow and Zeynep Somer-Topcu. 2011. "Is Anybody Listening? Evidence That Voters Do Not Respond to European Parties' Policy Statements During Elections." *American Journal of Political Science* 55(2):370–382.
- Adams, James, Michael Clark, Lawrence Ezrow and Garrett Glasgow. 2004. "Understanding Change and Stability in Party Ideologies: Do Parties Respond to Public Opinion or to Past Election Results?" *British Journal of Political Science* 34(4):589–610.
- Adams, James, Michael Clark, Lawrence Ezrow and Garrett Glasgow. 2006. "Are Niche Parties Fundamentally Different from Mainstream Parties? The Causes and the Electoral Consequences of Western European Parties' Policy Shifts, 1976–1998." *American Journal of Political Science* 50(3):513–529.
- Adams, James and Zeynep Somer-Topcu. 2009. "Policy Adjustment by Parties in Response to Rival Parties' Policy Shifts: Spatial Theory and the Dynamics of Party Competition in Twenty-Five Post-War Democracies." *British Journal of Political Science* 39(4):825.

- Akkerman, Tjitske. 2012. "Comparing Radical Right Parties in Government: Immigration and Integration Policies in Nine Countries (1996–2010)." *West European Politics* 35(3):511–529.
- Aldrich, John H. 1983. "A Downsian Spatial Model with Party Activism." *The American Political Science Review* 77(4):974–990.
- Aldrich, John H. 2011. *Why Parties? A Second Look*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Alexandrova, Petya. 2015. "Upsetting the Agenda: the Clout of External Focusing Events in the European Council." *Journal of Public Policy* 35(3):505–530.
- Alonso, Sonia and Sara Claro da Fonseca. 2011. "Immigration, Left and Right." *Party Politics* 18(6):865–884.
- Ansolabehere, Stephen and Shanto Iyengar. 1994. "Riding the Wave and Claiming Ownership over Issues: The Joint Effects of Advertising and News Coverage in Campaigns." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 58(3):335–357.
- Aragonès, Enriqueta, Micael Castanheira and Marco Giani. 2015. "Electoral Competition through Issue Selection." *American Journal of Political Science* 59(1):71–90.
- Arzheimer, Kai and Elisabeth Carter. 2006. "Political Opportunity Structures and Right-Wing Extremist Party Success." *European Journal of Political Research* 45(3):419–443.
- Bakker, Ryan, Catherine De Vries, Erica Edwards, Liesbet Hooghe, Seth Jolly, Gary Marks, Jonathan Polk, Jan Rovny, Marco Steenbergen and Milada Vachudova. 2015. "Measuring Party Positions in Europe: The Chapel Hill Expert Survey Trend File, 1999–2010." *Party Politics* 21(1):143–152.
- Bale, Tim. 2003. "Cinderella and her Ugly Sisters: the Mainstream and Extreme Right in Europe's Bipolarising Party Systems." *West European Politics* 26(3):67–90.
- Bale, Tim. 2008. "Turning Round the Telescope. Centre-Right Parties and Immigration and Integration Policy in Europe." *Journal of European Public Policy* 15(3):315–330.
- Bale, Tim. 2011. *The Conservative Party: From Thatcher to Cameron*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Bale, Tim, Christoffer Green-Pedersen, André Krouwel, Kurt Richard Luther and Nick Sitter. 2010. "If You Can't Beat Them, Join Them? Explaining Social Democratic Responses to the Challenge from the Populist Radical Right in Western Europe." *Political Studies* 58(3):410–426.
- Bartolini, Stefano. 1999. "Collusion, Competition and Democracy Part I." *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 11(4):435–470.

- Bartolini, Stefano. 2000. *The Political Mobilization of the European Left, 1860-1980. The Class Cleavage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Baum, Christopher F. 2001. "Residual Diagnostics for Cross-Section Time Series Regression Models." *The Stata Journal* 1(1):101–104.
- Bawn, Kathleen and Zeynep Somer-Topcu. 2012. "Government versus Opposition at the Polls: How Governing Status Affects the Impact of Policy Positions." *American Journal of Political Science* 46(3):433–446.
- Beck, Nathaniel and Jonathan N. Katz. 1995. "What To Do (And Not To Do) with Time-Series Cross-Section Data." *American Political Science Review* 89(3):634–647.
- Beck, Nathaniel and Jonathan N. Katz. 1996. "Nuisance vs. Substance: Specifying and Estimating Time-Series-Cross-Section Models." *Political Analysis* 6(1):1–36.
- Bélanger, Éric and Bonnie M. Meguid. 2008. "Issue Salience, Issue Ownership, and Issue-Based Vote Choice." *Electoral Studies* 27(3):477–491.
- Benoit, Kenneth and Michael Laver. 2006. *Party Policy in Modern Democracies*. New York: Routledge.
- Benoit, Kenneth and Michael Laver. 2012. "The Dimensionality of Political Space: Epistemological and Methodological Considerations." *European Union Politics* 13(2):194–218.
- Bevan, Shaun and Peter John. 2016. "Policy Representation by Party Leaders and Followers: What Drives UK Prime Minister's Questions?" *Government and Opposition* 51(1):59–83.
- Bille, Lars. 2001. "Democratizing a Democratic Procedure: Myth or Reality? Candidate Selection in Western European Parties, 1960-1990." *Party Politics* 7(3):363–380.
- Birkland, Thomas A. 1998. "Focusing events, mobilization, and agenda setting." *Journal of public policy* 18(1):53–74.
- Bischof, Daniel. 2015. "Towards a Renewal of the Niche Party Concept: Parties, Market Shares and Condensed Offers." *Party Politics* OnlineFirst:1–16.  
**URL:** [doi:10.1177/1354068815588259](https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068815588259)
- Boydston, Amber E., Shaun Bevan and Herschel F. Thomas. 2014. "The Importance of Attention Diversity and How to Measure It." *Policy Studies Journal* 42(2):173–196.
- Brambor, Thomas, William R. Clark and Matt Golder. 2006. "Understanding Interaction Models: Improving Empirical Analyses." *Political Analysis* 14(1):63–82.
- Brandenburg, Heinz. 2002. "Who Follows Whom?: The Impact of Parties on Media Agenda Formation in the 1997 British General Election Campaign." *The Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics* 7(3):34–54.

- Broockman, David E. and Daniel M. Butler. 2015. "The Causal Effects of Elite Position-Taking on Voter Attitudes: Field Experiments with Elite Communication." *American Journal of Political Science* OnlineFirst:1–14.  
**URL:** doi: 10.1111/ajps.12243
- Budge, Ian. 1994. "A New Spatial Theory of Party Competition: Uncertainty, Ideology and Policy Equilibria Viewed Comparatively and Temporally." *British Journal of Political Science* 24(4):443.
- Budge, Ian. 2000. "Expert Judgements of Party Policy Positions: Uses and Limitations in Political Research." *European Journal of Political Research* 37(1):103–113.
- Budge, Ian. 2015. "Issue Emphases, Saliency Theory and Issue Ownership: A Historical and Conceptual Analysis." *West European Politics* 38(4):761–777.
- Budge, Ian and Dennis Farlie. 1983. *Explaining and Predicting Elections: Issue Effects and Party Strategies in Twenty-Three Democracies*. London: Allan and Unwin.
- Budge, Ian, Hans-Dieter Klingemann, Andrea Volkens, Judith Bara and Eric Tanenbaum. 2001. *Mapping Policy Preferences: Estimates for Parties, Electors, and Governments, 1945–1998*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Budge, Ian, Lawrence Ezrow and Michael D. McDonald. 2010. "Ideology, Party Factionalism and Policy Change: An Integrated Dynamic Theory." *British Journal of Political Science* 40(4):781–804.
- Budge, Ian and Thomas Meyer. 2013. Understanding and Validating the Left-Right Scale (RILE). In *Mapping Policy Preferences from Texts III: Statistical Solutions for Manifesto Analysts*, ed. Andrea Volkens, Judith Bara, Ian Budge, Michael D. McDonald and Hans-Dieter Klingemann. Oxford: Oxford University Press pp. 85–106.
- Carmines, Edward G. and James A. Stimson. 1986. "On the Structure and Sequence of Issue Evolution." *The American Political Science Review* 80(3):901–920.
- Carmines, Edward G. and James A. Stimson. 1989. *Issue Evolution. Race and the Transformation of American Politics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Carter, Neil. 2006. "Party Politicization of the Environment in Britain." *Party Politics* 12(6):747–767.
- Ceron, Andrea. 2012. "Bounded oligarchy: How and When Factions Constrain Leaders in Party Position-Taking." *Electoral Studies* 31(4):689–107.
- Cho, Sungdai and James W. Endersby. 2003. "Issues, the Spatial Theory of Voting, and British General Elections: A Comparison of Proximity and Directional Models." *Public Choice* 114(3–4):275–293.
- Choi, In. 2001. "Unit Root Tests for Panel Data." *Journal of International Money and Finance* 20(2):249–272.

- Clarke, Harold, David Sanders, Marianne Stewart and Paul Whiteley. 2006. "Taking the Bloom Off New Labour's Rose: Party Choice and Voter Turnout in Britain, 2005." *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties* 16(1):3–36.
- Colomer, Joseph M. and Riccardo Puglisi. 2005. "Cleavages, Issues and Parties: A Critical Overview of the Literature." *European Political Science* 4(4):502–520.
- Cross, William P. and Richard S. Katz. 2013. *The Challenges of Intra-party Democracy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Dahlström, Carl and Peter Esaiasson. 2011. "The Immigration Issue and Anti-Immigrant Party Success in Sweden 1970-2006: A Deviant Case Analysis." *Party Politics* 19(2):343–364.
- Dalton, Russell J. 2004. *Democratic Challenges, Democratic Choices. The Erosion of Political Support in Advanced Industrial Democracies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Dalton, Russell J. 2015. "Party Representation Across Multiple Issue Dimensions." *Party Politics* FirstView:1–14.  
**URL:** doi: 10.1177/1354068815614515
- Dalton, Russell J. and Martin P. Wattenberg. 2000. *Parties without Partisans. Political Change in Advanced Industrial Democracies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Damore, David F. 2004. "The Dynamics of Issue Ownership in Presidential Campaigns." *Political Research Quarterly* 57(3):391–397.
- Damore, David F. 2005. "Issue Convergence in Presidential Campaigns." *Political Behavior* 27(1):71–97.
- de Hoyos, Rafael E. and Vasilis Sarafidis. 2006. "Testing for Cross-Sectional Dependence in Panel-Data Models." *Stata Journal* 6(4):482.
- De La O, Ana Lorena and Jonathan A. Rodden. 2008. "Does Religion Distract the Poor?: Income and Issue Voting Around the World." *Comparative Political Studies* 41(4/5):437.
- de Sio, Lorenzo and Till Weber. 2014. "Issue Yield: A Model of Party Strategy in Multidimensional Space." *American Political Science Review* 108(04):870–885.
- de Vries, Catherine E. 2007. "Sleeping Giant: Fact or Fairytale?: How European Integration Affects National Elections." *European Union Politics* 8(3):363–385.
- de Vries, Catherine E. and Erica E. Edwards. 2009. "Taking Europe To Its Extremes: Extremist Parties and Public Euroscepticism." *Party Politics* 15(1):5–28.
- de Vries, Catherine E. and Sara B. Hobolt. 2012. "When Dimensions Collide: The Electoral Success of Issue Entrepreneurs." *European Union Politics* 13(2):246–268.

- Dolezal, Martin, Laurenz Ennser-Jedenastik, Wolfgang C Müller and Anna Katharina Winkler. 2014. "How Parties Compete for Votes: A Test of Saliency Theory." *European Journal of Political Research* 53(1):57–76.
- Döring, Holger and Philip Manow. 2015. *Parliaments and governments database (Parl-Gov): Information on Parties, Elections and Cabinets in Modern Democracies*. Development Version.
- Downs, Anthony. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. New York: Harper.
- Drukker, David M. 2003. "Testing for Serial Correlation in Linear Panel-Data Models." *Stata Journal* 3(2):168–177.
- Dumont, Patrick and Hanna Bäck. 2006. "Why So Few, and Why So Late? Green Parties and the Question of Governmental Participation." *European Journal of Political Research* 45(s1):S35–S67.
- Duncan, Fraser. 2007. "'Lately, Things Just don't Seem the Same': External Shocks, Party Change and the Adaptation of the Dutch Christian Democrats during 'Purple Hague' 1994–8." *Party Politics* 13(1):69–87.
- Eurostat. 2015. "Population on 1 January by Age and Sex." *Population (Demography, Migration and Projections)*.  
**URL:** <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/population-demography-migration-projections/population-data/database> (accessed October 5, 2015)
- Ezrow, Lawrence. 2008. "Research Note: On the Inverse Relationship between Votes and Proximity for Niche Parties." *European Journal of Political Research* 47(2):206–220.
- Ezrow, Lawrence, Catherine E. de Vries, Marco Steenbergen and Erica E. Edwards. 2011. "Mean Voter Representation and Partisan Constituency Representation: Do Parties Respond to the Mean Voter Position or to Their Supporters?" *Party Politics* 17(3):275–301.
- Fernandez-Vazquez, Pablo. 2014. "And Yet It Moves: The Effect of Election Platforms on Party Policy Images." *Comparative Political Studies* 47(14):1919–1944.
- Flanagan, Scott C. and Aie-Rie Lee. 2003. "The New Politics, Culture Wars, and the Authoritarian-Libertarian Value Change in Advanced Industrial Democracies." *Comparative Political Studies* 36(3):235–270.
- Frank, Thomas. 2004. *What's the Matter with Kansas? How Conservatives Won the Heart of America*. New York: Henry Holt and Company.
- Franzmann, Simon and André Kaiser. 2006. "Locating Political Parties in Policy Space: A Reanalysis of Party Manifesto Data." *Party Politics* 12(2):163–188.
- Franzmann, Simon T. 2011. "Competition, Contest, and Cooperation: The Analytic Framework of the Issue Market." *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 23(3):317–343.

- Froio, Caterina, Shaun Bevan and Will Jennings. 2016. "Party Mandates and the Politics of Attention: Party platforms, Public Priorities and the Policy Agenda in Britain." *Party Politics* OnlineFirst:1–12.
- Gabel, Matthew J. and John D. Huber. 2000. "Putting Parties in Their Place: Inferring Party Left-Right Ideological Positions from Party Manifestos Data." *American Journal of Political Science* pp. 94–103.
- Gelman, Andrew and Jennifer Hill. 2007. *Data Analysis using Regression and Multi-level/Hierarchical Models*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Gemenis, Kostas. 2013. "What To Do (And Not To Do) with the Comparative Manifestos Project data." *Political Studies* 61(S1):3–23.
- Green, Jane. 2011. "A Test of Core Vote Theories: The British Conservatives, 1997–2005." *British Journal of Political Science* 41(04):735–764.
- Green, Jane and Sara B. Hobolt. 2008. "Owning the Issue Agenda: Party Strategies and Vote Choices in British Elections." *Electoral Studies* 27(3):460–476.
- Green-Pedersen, Christoffer. 2007a. "The Conflict of Conflicts in Comparative Perspective: Euthanasia as a Political Issue in Denmark, Belgium, and the Netherlands." *Comparative Politics* 39(3):273–291.
- Green-Pedersen, Christoffer. 2007b. "The Growing Importance of Issue Competition: The Changing Nature of Party Competition in Western Europe." *Political Studies* 55(3):607–628.
- Green-Pedersen, Christoffer. 2012. "A Giant Fast Asleep? Party Incentives and the Politicisation of European Integration." *Political Studies* 60(1):115–130.
- Green-Pedersen, Christoffer and Jesper Krogstrup. 2008. "Immigration as a Political Issue in Denmark and Sweden." *European Journal of Political Research* 47(5):610–634.
- Green-Pedersen, Christoffer and Peter B. Mortensen. 2010. "Who Sets the Agenda and Who Responds to it in the Danish Parliament? A New Model of Issue Competition and Agenda-Setting." *European Journal of Political Research* 49(2):257–281.
- Green-Pedersen, Christoffer and Peter B. Mortensen. 2014. "Avoidance and Engagement: Issue Competition in Multiparty Systems." *Political Studies* FirstView:1–18.  
**URL:** doi: 10.1111/1467-9248.12121
- Greene, William H. 2000. *Econometric Analysis (4th edition)*. New York: MacMillan.
- Greene, Zachary. 2015. "Competing on the Issues: How Experience in Government and Economic Conditions Influence the Scope of Parties' Policy Message." *Party Politics* FirstView:1–14.  
**URL:** doi: 10.1177/1354068814567026

- Grofman, Bernard. 2004. "Downs and Two-Party Convergence." *Annual Review of Political Science* 7(1):25–46.
- Halpin, Darren R. and Herschel F. Thomas III. 2012. "Evaluating the Breadth of Policy Engagement by Organized Interests." *Public Administration* 90(3):582–599.
- Han, Kyung Joon. 2015. "The Impact of Radical Right-Wing Parties on the Positions of Mainstream Parties Regarding Multiculturalism." *West European Politics* 38(3):557–576.
- Harmel, Robert and Kenneth Janda. 1994. "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change." *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 6(3):259–287.
- Harmel, Robert and Kenneth Janda. 1996. *Longitudinal Study of Party Change, 1950–1990*.  
**URL:** <http://janda.org/ICPP/ICPP1990/index.htm>
- Hay, Colin. 2007. *Why We Hate Politics*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Hertner, Isabelle. 2015. "Is it Always Up To the Leadership? European Policy-Making in the Labour Party, Parti Socialiste (PS) and Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (SPD)." *Party Politics* 21(3):470–480.
- Hillygus, Sunshine D. 2010. Campaign Effects on Vote Choice. In *Oxford Handbook of American Elections and Political Behavior*, ed. Jan Leighly. Oxford: Oxford University Press pp. 326–345.
- Hobolt, Sara B. and Catherine E. de Vries. 2015. "Issue Entrepreneurship and Multiparty Competition." *Comparative Political Studies* 48(9):1159–1185.
- Hobolt, Sara B. and James Tilley. 2016. "Fleeing the Centre: The Rise of Challenger Parties in the Aftermath of the Euro Crisis." *West European Politics* 39(5):971–991.
- Hobolt, Sara B. and Jeffrey A. Karp. 2010. "Voters and Coalition Governments." *Electoral Studies* 29(3):299–307.
- Hobolt, Sara B., Robert Klemmensen and Mark Pickup. 2008. "The Dynamics of Issue Diversity in Party Rhetoric." *OCSID 03 Working Paper*.  
**URL:** <http://ocsid.politics.ox.ac.uk/publications/>
- Holian, David B. 2004. "He's Stealing my Issues! Clinton's Crime Rhetoric and the Dynamics of Issue Ownership." *Political Behavior* 26(2):95–124.
- Hooghe, Liesbet and Gary Marks. 2009. "A Postfunctionalist Theory of European Integration: From Permissive Consensus to Constraining Dissensus." *British Journal of Political Science* 39(01):1–23.
- Hooghe, Liesbet, Gary Marks and Carole J. Wilson. 2002. "Does Left/Right Structure Party Positions on European Integration?" *Comparative Political Studies* 35(8):965–989.



- Hooghe, Liesbet, Ryan Bakker, Anna Brigevid, Catherine De Vries, Erica Edwards, Gary Marks, Jan Rovny, Marco Steenbergen and Milada Vachudova. 2010. "Reliability and Validity of the 2002 and 2006 Chapel Hill Expert Surveys on Party Positioning." *European Journal of Political Research* 49(5):687–703.
- Hopmann, David N., Christian Elmelund-Præstekær, Erik Albæk, Rens Vliegthart and Claes H. de Vreese. 2012. "Party Media Agenda-Setting: How Parties influence Election News Coverage." *Party Politics* 18(2):173–191.
- Hotelling, Harold. 1929. "Stability in Competition." *The Economic Journal* 39(153):41–57.
- Jennings, Will, Shaun Bevan, Arco Timmermans, Gerard Breeman, Sylvain Brouard, Laura Chaqués-Bonafont, Christoffer Green-Pedersen, Peter John, Peter B. Mortensen and Anna M. Palau. 2011. "Effects of the Core Functions of Government on the Diversity of Executive Agendas." *Comparative Political Studies* 44(8):1001–1030.
- Karreth, Johannes, Jonathan T. Polk and Christopher S. Allen. 2013. "Catchall or Catch and Release? The Electoral Consequences of Social Democratic Parties' March to the Middle in Western Europe." *Comparative Political Studies* 46(7):791–822.
- Kernell, Georgia. 2015. "Party Nomination Rules and Campaign Participation." *Political Studies* 48(13):1814–1843.
- Kirchheimer, Otto. 1966. The Transformation of Western European Party Systems. In *Political Parties and Political Development*, ed. Joseph LaPalombara and Myron Weiner. Princeton (NJ): Princeton University Press pp. 177–200.
- Kitschelt, Herbert. 1988. "Left-Libertarian Parties: Explaining Innovation in Competitive Party Systems." *World Politics* 40(2):194–234.
- Kitschelt, Herbert. 1989. *The Logics of Party Formation. Ecological Politics in Belgium and West Germany*. Ithaca (NY) & London: Cornell University Press.
- Kitschelt, Herbert. 1994. *The Transformation of European Social Democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kitschelt, Herbert. 2007. Party Systems. In *Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, ed. Carles Boix and Susan Stokes. Oxford: Oxford University Press pp. 522–554.
- Klingemann, Hans-Dieter, Andrea Volkens, Judith Bara, Ian Budge and Micheal McDonald. 2006. *Mapping Policy Preferences II: Estimates for Parties, Electors, and Governments in Eastern Europe, the European Union and the OECD, 1990–2003*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Klingemann, Hans-Dieter, Richard I. Hofferbert and Ian Budge. 1994. *Parties, Policies, and Democracy*. Boulder (CO): Westview Press.

- Klüver, Heike and Iñaki Sagarzazu. 2016. "Setting the Agenda or Responding to Voters? Political Parties, Voters and Issue Attention." *West European Politics* 39(2):380–398.
- Klüver, Heike and Jae-Jae Spoon. 2014. "Who Responds? Voters, Parties and Issue Attention." *British Journal of Political Science* FirstView:1–22.  
**URL:** doi: 10.1017/S0007123414000313
- Klüver, Heike and Jae-Jae Spoon. 2015. "Bringing Salience Back In: Explaining Voting Defection in the European Parliament." *Party Politics* 21(4):553–564.
- Kriesi, Hans Peter, Edgar Grande, Romain Lachat, Martin Dolezal, Simon Bornschier and Timotheos Frey. 2006. "Globalization and the Transformation of the National Political Space: Six European Countries Compared." *European Journal of Political Research* 45(6):921–956.
- Laakso, Markku and Rein Taagepera. 1979. "Effective Number of Parties: A Measure with Application to West Europe." *Comparative Political Studies* 12(1):3–27.
- Lacewell, Onawa Promise. 2013. "Beyond Class: Class Party Programmatic Responses to Globalization Pressures and Cleavage Change." *APSA 2013 Annual Meeting Paper* .  
**URL:** <http://ssrn.com/abstract=2300918>
- Laver, Michael. 2001. "Why Vote-seeking Parties May Make Voters Miserable." *Irish Political Studies* 26(4):489–500.
- Laver, Michael. 2005. "Policy and the Dynamics of Political Competition." *American Political Science Review* 99(02):263–281.
- Laver, Michael and Ben W. Hunt. 1992. *Policy and Party Competition*. New York & London: Routledge.
- Lefkofridi, Zoe, Markus Wagner and Johanna E. Willmann. 2014. "Left-Authoritarians and Policy Representation in Western Europe: Electoral Choice across Ideological Dimensions." *West European Politics* 37(1):65–90.
- Lehrer, Ron. 2012. "Intra-Party Democracy and Party Responsiveness." *West European Politics* 35(16):1295–1319.
- Lindaman, Kara and Donald P Haider-Markel. 2002. "Issue Evolution, Political Parties, and the Culture Wars." *Political Research Quarterly* 55(1):91–110.
- Lipset, Seymour Martin and Stein Rokkan. 1976. Cleavage Structures, Party Systems, and Voter Alignments. An Introduction. In *Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross-National Perspectives*, ed. Seymour Martin Lipset and Stein Rokkan. New York: The Free Press pp. 1–64.
- Lowe, Will, Kenneth Benoit, Slava Mikhaylov and Michael Laver. 2011. "Scaling Policy Preferences from Coded Political Texts." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 36(1):123–155.

- Mair, Peter. 2002. In the Aggregate: Mass Electoral Behavior in Europe, 1950-2000. In *Comparative Democratic Politics*, ed. Hans Keman. London: Sage pp. 122-142.
- Mair, Peter. 2007. Left-Right Orientations. In *The Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior*, ed. Russell J. Dalton and Hans-Dieter Klingemann. Oxford: Oxford University Press pp. 206-222.
- Mair, Peter and Ingrid van Biezen. 2001. "Party Membership in Twenty European Democracies, 1980-2000." *Party Politics* 7(1):5-21.
- Marks, Gary, Liesbet Hooghe, Moira Nelson and Erica Edwards. 2006. "Party Competition and European Integration in the East and West: Different Structure, Same Causality." *Comparative Political Studies* 39(2):155-175.
- McCombs, Maxwell E. and Donald L. Shaw. 1972. "The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 36(2):176-187.
- McCombs, Maxwell E. and Jian-Hua Zhu. 1995. "Capacity, Diversity, and Volatility of the Public Agenda Trends From 1954 to 1994." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 59(4):495-525.
- Meguid, Bonnie M. 2005. "Competition between Unequals: The Role of Mainstream Party Strategy in Niche Party Success." *American Political Science Review* 99(3):347.
- Meguid, Bonnie M. 2008. *Party Competition between Unequals. Strategies and Electoral Fortunes in Western Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Meijers, Maurits J. 2015. "Contagious Euroscepticism: The Impact of Eurosceptic Support on Mainstream Party Positions on European Integration." *Party Politics* OnlineFirst:1-11.  
**URL:** doi: 10.1177/1354068815601787
- Meyer, Marco and Harald Schoen. 2015. "Avoiding Vote Loss by Changing Policy Positions: The Fukushima Disaster, Party Responses, and the German Electorate." *Party Politics* OnlineFirst:1-13.  
**URL:** doi: 10.1177/1354068815602145
- Meyer, Thomas M. and Bernhard Miller. 2015. "The Niche Party Concept and its Measurement." *Party Politics* 21(2):259-271.
- Meyer, Thomas M. and Markus Wagner. 2013. "Mainstream or Niche? Vote-Seeking Incentives and the Programmatic Strategies of Political Parties." *Comparative Political Studies* 46(10):1246-1272.
- Meyer, Thomas M. and Markus Wagner. 2015. "Issue Engagement in Election Campaigns. The Impact of Electoral Incentives and Organizational Constraints." *Political Science Research and Methods* FirstView:1-17.  
**URL:** doi:10.1017/psrm.2015.40

- Mudde, Cas. 1999. "The Single-Issue Party Thesis: Extreme Right Parties and the Immigration Issue." *West European Politics* 22(3):182–197.
- Mudde, Cas. 2007. *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Müller, Wolfgang C and Kaare Strøm. 1999. *Policy, Office, or Votes? How Political Parties in Western Europe make Hard Decisions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Netjes, Catherine E. and Harmen A. Binnema. 2007. "The Salience of the European Integration Issue: Three Data Sources Compared." *Electoral Studies* 26(1):39–49.
- Norris, Pippa. 2005. *Radical Right: Voters and Parties in the Electoral Market*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Odmalm, Pontus. 2011. "Political Parties and 'the Immigration Issue': Issue Ownership in Swedish Parliamentary Elections 1991–2010." *West European Politics* 34(5):1070–1091.
- OECD. 2015. "International Migration Database." *OECD International Migration Statistics (database)* .  
**URL:** doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/data-00342-en> (accessed October 5, 2015)
- Panagopoulos, Costas. 2015. "All About that Base: Changing Campaign Strategies in US Presidential Elections." *Party Politics* OnlineFirst:1–12.  
**URL:** doi: 10.1177/1354068815605676
- Panebianco, Angelo. 1988. *Political Parties: Organization and Power*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Pedersen, Helene Helboe. 2010. "How Intra-Party Power Relations Affect the Coalition Behaviour of Political Parties." *Party Politics* 16(6):737–754.
- Pedersen, Helene Helboe. 2012. "What Do Parties Want? Policy versus Office." *West European Politics* 35(4):896–910.
- Pesaran, Mohammad H. 2004. "General Diagnostic Tests for Cross Section Dependence in Panels." *CESifo working papers*, No. 1229 .  
**URL:** <http://hdl.handle.net/10419/18868>
- Petrocik, John R. 1996. "Issue Ownership in Presidential Elections, with a 1980 Case Study." *American Journal of Political Science* 40(3):825–850.
- Petrocik, John R., William L. Benoit and Glenn J. Hansen. 2003. "Issue Ownership and Presidential Campaigning, 1952–2000." *Political Science Quarterly* 118(4):599–626.
- Plümper, Thomas, Vera E. Troeger and Philip Manow. 2005. "Panel Data Analysis in Comparative Politics: Linking Method to Theory." *European Journal of Political Research* 44(2):327–354.

- Polk, Jonathan and Ann-Kristin Kölln. 2016. "The Lives of the Party: Contemporary Approaches to the Study of Intraparty Politics in Europe." *Party Politics* OnlineFirst:1–4.  
**URL:** doi:10.1177/1354068816655572
- Pulzer, Peter. 1999. "The German Federal Election of 1998." *West European Politics* 22(3):241–249.
- Ray, Leonard. 1999. "Measuring Party Orientations Toward European Integration: Results from an Expert Survey." *European Journal of Political Research* 36(2):283–306.
- Rihoux, Benoît and Wolfgang Rüdig. 2006. "Analyzing Greens in Power: Setting the Agenda." *European Journal of Political Research* 45(s1):S1–S33.
- Riker, William H. 1982. *Liberalism Against Populism: A Confrontation Between the Theory of Democracy and the Theory of Social Science*. Prospect Heights (IL): Waveland Press.
- Riker, William H. 1986. *The Art of Political Manipulation*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Riker, William H. 1993a. Introduction. In *Agenda Formation*, ed. William H. Riker. Ann Arbor (MI): University of Michigan Press pp. 1–12.
- Riker, William H. 1993b. Rhetorical Interaction in the Ratification Campaigns. In *Agenda Formation*, ed. William H. Riker. Ann Arbor (MI): University of Michigan Press pp. 81–123.
- Robertson, David. 1976. *A Theory of Party Competition*. London: John Wiley & Sons.
- Rohrschneider, Robert and Stephen Whitefield. 2012. *The Strain of Representation: How Parties Represent Diverse Voters in Western and Eastern Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Rooduijn, Matthijs, Sarah L. de Lange and Wouter van der Brug. 2014. "A populist Zeitgeist? Programmatic Contagion by Populist Parties in Western Europe." *Party Politics* 20(4):563–575.
- Rovny, Jan. 2012. "Who Emphasizes and Who Blurs? Party Strategies in Multidimensional Competition." *European Union Politics* 12(2):269–292.
- Rovny, Jan. 2014. "Communism, Federalism, and Ethnic Minorities: Explaining Party Competition Patterns in Eastern Europe." *World Politics* 66(4):669–708.
- Sargent, Thomas J. 1976. "A Classical Macroeconometric Model for the United States." *The Journal of Political Economy* 84:207–237.
- Scarrow, Susan. 2015. *Beyond Party Members: Changing Approaches to Partisan Mobilization*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Schattschneider, Elmer E. 1960. *The Semi-Sovereign People: A Realist's View of Democracy in America*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Schlesinger, Joseph A. 1975. "The Primary Goals of Political Parties: A Clarification of Positive Theory." *The American Political Science Review* 69(03):840–849.
- Schumacher, Gijs, Catherine E. de Vries and Barbara Vis. 2013. "Why Do Parties Change Position? Party Organization and Environmental Incentives." *The Journal of Politics* 75(2):464–477.
- Schumacher, Gijs and Kees van Kersbergen. 2014. "Do Mainstream Parties Adapt to the Welfare Chauvinism of Populist Parties?" *Party Politics* OnlineFirst:1–13.  
**URL:** doi: 10.1177/1354068814549345
- Seeberg, Henrik B. 2013. "The Opposition's Policy Influence Through Issue Politicisation." *Journal of Public Policy* 33(1):89–107.
- Seeberg, Henrik B. 2014. "Who Owns the Issue? A Comparative Study of Issue Ownership." *APSA 2014 Annual Meeting Paper*.  
**URL:** <http://ssrn.com/abstract=2455350>
- Shannon, Claude E. and Warren Weaver. 1949. *The Mathematical Theory of Communication*. Urbana (IL): The University of Illinois Press.
- Sheingate, Adam D. 2006. "Structure and Opportunity: Committee Jurisdiction and Issue Attention in Congress." *American Journal of Political Science* 50(4):844–859.
- Sigelman, Lee and Emmett H. Buell. 2004. "Avoidance or Engagement? Issue Convergence in US Presidential Campaigns, 1960–2000." *American Journal of Political Science* 48(4):650–661.
- Somer-Topcu, Zeynep. 2009. "Timely Decisions: The Effects of Past National Elections on Party Policy Change." *The Journal of Politics* 71(01):238.
- Somer-Topcu, Zeynep. 2015. "Everything to Everyone: The Electoral Consequences of the Broad-Appeal Strategy in Europe." *American Journal of Political Science* 59(4):841–854.
- Spies, Dennis and Simon T. Franzmann. 2011. "A Two-Dimensional Approach to the Political Opportunity Structure of Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe." *West European Politics* 34(5):1044–1069.
- Spoon, Jae-Jae, Sara B. Hobolt and Catherine E. de Vries. 2014. "Going Green: Explaining Issue Competition on the Environment." *European Journal of Political Research* 53(2):363–380.
- Steenbergen, Marco R. and David J. Scott. 2004. Contesting Europe? The Salience of European Integration as a Party Issue. In *European Integration and Political Conflict*, ed. Gary Marks and Marco R. Steenbergen. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press pp. 165–191.

- Steenbergen, Marco R and Gary Marks. 2007. "Evaluating Expert Judgements." *European Journal of Political Research* 46(3):347–366.
- Stimson, James A., Michael B. MacKuen and Robert S. Erikson. 1995. "Dynamic Representation." *American Political Science Review* pp. 543–565.
- Stokes, Donald E. 1963. "Spatial Models of Party Competition." *The American Political Science Review* 57(2):368–377.
- Stoll, Heather. 2010. "Elite-Level Conflict Salience and Dimensionality in Western Europe: Concepts and Empirical Findings." *West European Politics* 33(3):445–473.
- Strøm, Kaare. 1990. "A Behavioral Theory of Competitive Political Parties." *American journal of political science* 34(2):565–598.
- Szczerbiak, Aleks and Paul Taggart. 2000. "Opposing Europe: Party Systems and Opposition to the Union, the Euro and Europeanisation." *Opposing Europe Working Paper No. 1, Sussex European Institute* .  
**URL:** <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/Units/SEI/pdfs/wp36.pdf>
- Taggart, Paul. 1998. "A Touchstone of Dissent: Euroscepticism in Contemporary Western European Party Systems." *European Journal of Political Research* 33(3):363–388.
- Taggart, Paul and Aleks Szczerbiak. 2008. Introduction: Opposing Europe? The Politics of Euroscepticism in Europe. In *Opposing Europe? The Comparative Party Politics of Euroscepticism. Volume 1: Case Studies and Country Surveys*, ed. Aleks Szczerbiak and Paul Taggart. Oxford: Oxford University Press pp. 1–15.
- Tavits, Margit. 2007. "Principle vs. Pragmatism: Policy Shifts and Political Competition." *American Journal of Political Science* 51(1):151–165.
- Tavits, Margit. 2008. "The Role of Parties' Past Behavior in Coalition Formation." *American Political Science Review* 102(4):495–507.
- Tavits, Margit and Joshua D. Potter. 2015. "The Effect of Inequality and Social Identity on Party Strategies." *American Journal of Political Science* 59(3):744–758.  
**URL:** doi: 10.1111/ajps.12144
- the Economist. 2015. "An Interview with David Cameron. A Lucky Leader in an Unlucky Time." *From the Print Edition. April 25, 2015* .  
**URL:** <http://www.economist.com/news/britain/21649461-conservative-prime-minister-fight-his-life-time-put-his-shoulder> (accessed July 13, 2015)
- the World Bank. 2015. "World Development Indicators." .  
**URL:** <http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators> (accessed June 30, 2015)
- Usherwood, Simon. 2008. "The Dilemmas of a Single-Issue Party—The UK Independence Party." *Representation* 44(3):255–264.

- van Biezen, Ingrid and Thomas Poguntke. 2014. "The Decline of Membership-Based Politics." *Party Politics* 20(2):205–216.
- van de Wardt, Marc. 2014a. *The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly: Patterns of Issue Competition between Government, Challenger and Mainstream Opposition Parties in Western Europes*. PhD Thesis: University of Amsterdam, Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences, Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research (AISSR).  
**URL:** <http://hdl.handle.net/11245/1.417003>
- van de Wardt, Marc. 2014b. "Putting the Damper on: Do Parties De-Emphasize Issues in Response to Internal Divisions Among their Supporters?" *Party Politics* 20(3):330–340.
- van de Wardt, Marc. 2015. "Desperate Needs, Desperate Deeds: Why Mainstream Parties Respond to the Issues of Niche Parties." *West European Politics* 38(1):93–122.
- van de Wardt, Marc, Catherine E. de Vries and Sara B. Hobolt. 2014. "Exploiting the Cracks: Wedge Issues in Multiparty Competition." *The Journal of Politics* 76(4):986–999.
- van der Brug, Wouter and Joost van Spanje. 2009. "Immigration, Europe and the 'New' Cultural Dimension." *European Journal of Political Research* 48(3):309–334.
- van der Eijk, Cees and Mark N. Franklin. 2004. Potential for Contestation on European Matters at National Elections in Europe. In *European Integration and Political Conflict*, ed. Gary Marks and Marco R. Steenbergen. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press pp. 165–191.
- van Holsteyn, Joop J. M. and Galen A. Irwin. 2003. "Never a Dull Moment: Pim Fortuyn and the Dutch Parliamentary Election of 2002." *West European Politics* 26(2):41–66.
- van Kersbergen, Kees and André Krouwel. 2008. "A Double-Edged Sword! The Dutch Centre-Right and the 'Foreigners Issue'." *Journal of European Public Policy* 15(3):398–414.
- van Spanje, Joost. 2010. "Contagious Parties: Anti-Immigration Parties and Their Impact on Other Parties' Immigration Stances in Contemporary Western Europe." *Party Politics* 16(5):563–586.
- Vavreck, Lynn. 2009. *The Message Matters: the Economy and Presidential Campaigns*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Volkens, Andrea, Pola Lehmann, Nicolas Merz, Sven Regel and Annika Werner. 2014. *The Manifesto Data Collection. Manifesto Project (MRG/CMP/MARPOR). Version 2014b*. Berlin: Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung. with Lacewell, Onawa Promise.



- Wagner, Markus. 2011. "Defining and Measuring Niche Parties." *Party Politics* 18(6):845–864.
- Wagner, Markus. 2012. "When Do Parties Emphasise Extreme Positions? How Strategic Incentives for Policy Differentiation Influence Issue Importance." *European Journal of Political Research* 51(1):64–88.
- Wagner, Markus and Thomas M. Meyer. 2014. "Which Issues do Parties Emphasise? Salience Strategies and Party Organisation in Multiparty Systems." *West European Politics* 37(5):1019–1045.
- Walgrave, Stefaan and Frédéric Varone. 2008. "Punctuated Equilibrium and Agenda Setting: Bringing Parties Back in: Policy Change after the Dutroux Crisis in Belgium." *Governance* 21(3):365–395.
- Walgrave, Stefaan, Jonas Lefevere and Anke Tresch. 2012. "The Associative Dimension of Issue Ownership." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 76(4):771–782.
- Walgrave, Stefaan, Jonas Lefevere and Michiel Nuytemans. 2009. "Issue Ownership Stability and Change: How Political Parties Claim and Maintain Issues through Media Appearances." *Political Communication* 26(2):153–172.
- Walgrave, Stefaan and Peter van Aelst. 2006. "The Contingency of the Mass Media's Political Agenda Setting Power: Toward a Preliminary Theory." *Journal of Communication* 56(1):88–109.
- Ward, Dalston, Jeong Hyun Kim, Matthew Graham and Margit Tavits. 2015. "How Economic Integration Affects Party Issue Emphases." *Comparative Political Studies* 48(10):1227–1259.
- Ware, Alan. 1992. "Activist–Leader Relations and the Structure of Political Parties: 'Exchange' Models and Vote-Seeking Behaviour in Parties." *British Journal of Political Science* 22(01):71–92.
- Werts, Han, Peer Scheepers and Marcel Lubbers. 2012. "Euro-Scepticism and Radical Right-Wing Voting in Europe, 2002–2008: Social Cleavages, Socio-Political Attitudes and Contextual Characteristics Determining Voting for the Radical Right." *European Union Politics* 14(2):183–205.
- Williams, Laron K., Katsunori Seki and Guy D. Whitten. 2016. "You've Got Some Explaining To Do. The Influence of Economic Conditions and Spatial Competition on Party Strategy." *Political Science Research and Methods* 4(1):47–63.
- Wlezien, Christopher. 2005. "On the Salience of Political Issues: The Problem with 'Most Important Problem'." *Electoral Studies* 24(4):555–579.
- Wolkenstein, Fabio. 2015. "A Deliberative Model of Intra-Party Democracy." *Journal of Political Philosophy* Online Early View:1–24.  
**URL:** doi: 10.1111/jopp.12064
- Wooldridge, Jeffrey M. 2002. *Econometric Analysis of Cross Section and Panel Data*. Cambridge: The MIT Press.